

FORCE PROTECTION AND MISSION ACCOMPLISHMENT  
IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

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The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are those of the student and do not necessarily represent the views of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College or any other governmental agency. (References to this study should include the foregoing statement.)

## ABSTRACT

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FORCE PROTECTION AND MISSION ACCOMPLISHMENT IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA, by MAJ Perry D. Rearick, 79 pages.

Currently, there is a perception among military leaders that Americans view casualties as an unacceptable aspect of military operations. This perception has influenced the way peace operations have been conducted and some have argued that avoiding casualties was more important than the mission for US forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The purpose of this thesis is to analyze the relationship between force protection and mission accomplishment for US forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Evidence shows that US force protection measures hindered certain aspects of the mission there. First, protecting the force was a stated mission for US forces in Task Force Eagle during the first rotation as part of the Implementation Force. Second, force protection measures hindered the American soldier's ability to foster a rapport with the local people, as the changing environment demanded more civil-military cooperation. Third, the disparity between the force protection measures of US and non-US forces eroded the mutual confidence necessary for the success of multinational operations. Finally, US forces developed force protection measures using an approach that strove to balance protection with the mission, rather than viewing protection as an element of combat power that enhances a unit's ability to accomplish the mission.

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## ACRONYMS

ACLANT	Allied Command Atlantic
AD	Armored Division
BiH	Bosnia and Herzegovina
CAC	Combined Arms Center
CINC	Commander in Chief
DC	District of Columbia
DoD	Department of Defense
DPA	Dayton Peace Accord
EC	European Community
FM	Field Manual
GFAP	General Framework Agreement for Peace
IFOR	Implementation Force
JNA	Yugoslav People's Army
JP	Joint Publication
LTG	Lieutenant General
MG	Major General
MLRS	Multiple Launch Rocket Sysytem
MND	Multinational Division
MNF	Multinational Force
MOOTW	Military Operations Other Than War
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
PLO	Palestinian Liberation Organization

SDS	Serbian Democratic Party
SFOR	Stabilization Force
SHAPE	Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe
SOF	Special Operations Forces
ST	Student Text
TF	Task Force
UN	United Nations
UNPROFOR	United Nations Protection Forces
US	United States
USEUCOM	United States European Command

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

For a number of reasons, our society, nation, and military have become increasingly sensitive to the issue of casualties as a result of military operations.<sup>1</sup> The causes for a growing national concern regarding casualties are many, and one could arguably declare that America has developed an aversion to casualties. Regardless of the degree of this aversion, or the intensity of the debate surrounding this issue, American values have long abhorred meaningless and senseless death, and the American people expect their Army to reflect their national values.<sup>2</sup>

The mission of the Army is to deter war, and if deterrence fails, to conduct and win war decisively.<sup>3</sup> The Army must accomplish its mission in an ever-changing environment that includes an operational spectrum of peacetime competition, conflict and war, and everything in between. Army leaders are trained to accomplish assigned missions with minimal loss of their military capabilities, and actions that preserve capabilities are integrated into all aspects of operational planning in the Army. Soldiers are the Army's most precious asset. Preserving them is an integral part of every mission, and an inherent responsibility of every leader. However, it seems that for the Army protecting military forces has become more important than accomplishing whatever mission they are called upon to do.

As the nation grows to expect casualty-free military operations, the Army will inevitably find itself striving to meet those expectations. However, it is not easy to conduct casualty-free military operations. The US Army will naturally struggle to balance the expectations of the nation, with the challenging realities of a dangerous

environment. This struggle is taking place today as the Army conducts a complex, multinational, peacekeeping operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH).

This research will answer a number of questions related to the Army's application of force protection measures in peace operations, which are becoming more typical of how the US military will be used in the future. It specifically uses military operations conducted in BiH, by Task Force Eagle from January 1996–July 1998, to examine the relationship between force protection and mission accomplishment. In fact, the operations of Task Force Eagle demonstrate that US force protection measures did hinder certain aspects of the mission in BiH. Additionally, this research shows that protecting the force was a stated mission for US forces in Task Force Eagle during the first rotation as part of the Implementation Force (IFOR). Also, while force protection measures did not hamper the ability of US forces to accomplish many of their initial tasks, it did hinder the American soldiers' ability to foster a rapport with the local people as progress toward stability was made and the environment demanded more civil-military cooperation. As time went on, the disparity between the force protection measures of US forces and non-US forces eroded the confidence necessary for the success of multinational military operations. Finally, the US military developed force protection measures using an approach that strove to balance protection with the mission, rather than using the Army doctrinal approach, which views protection as an element that enhances a unit's ability to accomplish the mission.

At the core of this study are two military terms, that seem fairly simple at first--force protection and mission. However, when one considers these terms in the context of military peace operations in the complex and volatile Balkans, the words can be difficult

to understand. Later chapters will analyze these two terms in detail, but it is worthwhile to briefly examine them now.

The meaning of force protection in the US military has evolved over the past decade to take on a broader and more complex meaning. This evolution has led to considerable confusion when discussing force protection policies. The joint, Department of Defense, definition of force protection differs from the Army's definition. According to Joint Publication (JP) 1-02, force protection is a program to protect uniformed personnel, civilians, family members, facilities, and equipment in all locations and situations.<sup>4</sup> The Army defines protection in Field Manual (FM) 100-5, Operations, as one of the four elements of combat power. Protection conserves the fighting potential of a force so that it can be applied at a decisive place and time.<sup>5</sup> Army FM 100-23, Peace Operations, considers force protection to be a planning consideration that is an inherent part of all aspects of operations to establish and maintain peace.<sup>6</sup> Central to every definition is that leaders must apply protective measures to retain those resources, including people, which they need to use in a decisive manner to accomplish their mission.

Understanding the mission of military forces in BiH has been elusive for the vast majority of American citizens. Fundamental to examining the relationship between mission accomplishment and force protection is understanding the true nature of the mission of military forces in BiH. The US, and its Allies are pursuing the same goals in BiH--peace and stability. The Dayton Peace Accord is the framework, or plan, for lasting peace in BiH and contains specific annexes providing the necessary authority to the military forces of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in their conduct of

operations. In order to understand how a lasting peace will be achieved in BiH, one must understand the mission of the NATO-led peacekeeping force, the complex environment of tenuous peace in BiH, and be able identify the critical aspects of the mission that are key to achieving mission success.

This study is not intended to be a history of conflict in the Balkans; however, to understand the nature of instability in BiH, one must have a basic understanding of the recent state of conflict in BiH, Croatia, and Serbia. The world's reactions to the events of the late 1980s and early 1990s in Yugoslavia ultimately led to the deployment a NATO-led military force to enforce a tenuous peace plan. This NATO-led force has been conducting peace operations in BiH since 1995, and many knowledgeable opinion-makers believe that peacekeeping should continue for possibly a generation to be truly successful. Because, the NATO-led force does not measure progress in terms of time, this study will not use time as a measure of success. Instead, research, using a cause and effect approach, will focus on determining how US force protection policy influenced mission analysis, the decisions of military leaders, and the conduct of operations. For example, did force protection policy dictate the minimum size of patrolling units, and thus cause units to conduct fewer security patrols than were determined necessary to accomplish the mission of providing a secure environment for the population?

American concerns regarding casualties led to an unprecedented emphasis on force protection for US military forces in BiH. This study does not intend to determine the roots of American casualty aversion, but it will look at how casualties influenced US policy decisions by examining two modern American military operations--Lebanon and Somalia. It does not intend to find fault with the National Command Authority, elected

officials, the American public, or military leaders at any level. Nor is it designed as a means of debating whether the expectations of the Americans are realistic in terms of assuming low US casualties in military operations. However, it uses policy statements, After Action Reviews, and reports to better understand the nature of the current emphasis on force protection.

Doctrinal analysis is used to gain a better understanding of the Joint and Army definitions of force protection, and to become familiar with how senior leaders view the relationship between force protection and mission accomplishment. This study does not argue whether current or evolving Army doctrine is valid for peace operations. There will be no comparison of US with non-US doctrine to determine if one is better, or more valid, than the other. However, US multinational doctrine will be used to evaluate the effects of force protection policy on multinational operations.

This study does not assume to provide all the answers regarding the relationship between force protection and mission accomplishment in BiH. It uses a variety of methods to examine the relationship between force protection and mission accomplishment in BiH. It draws upon texts related to the nature of the conflict in BiH, Department of Defense and Army doctrinal references, the military annex to the Dayton Peace Accord, military operational plans for operation Joint Endeavor and Joint Guard, existing publications related to the topic, and original surveys and interviews of soldiers who have participated in operations in BiH. The purpose of this research is to gain a better understanding of how US force protection policy in BiH has affected the military's ability to achieve mission success while conducting peace operations as part of a multinational force.

The framework of the research presentation is organized into 5 chapters. Chapter 1 is an introduction, and sets the stage for the research presentation. Chapter 2 provides the reader with background information concerning the nature of the conflict in BiH through NATO and US involvement in peace operations. Chapter 3 looks at how casualties from US intervention have led to policy decisions over the last 20 years, and analyzes the evolution of US force protection doctrine and policy over the last decade. Chapter 4 analyzes the mission of military forces in BiH focusing on the US-led task force, and examines the relationship between force protection and mission accomplishment. Chapter 5 summarizes the conclusions of the research.

One additional, important point must be highlighted to understand the unprecedented difficulty of the complex nature of the mission in BiH. The US Army tailors the training of its soldiers, to include its general officers, toward conducting military operations in low-to-mid intensity conflicts. Nothing that the Army's generals experienced at the maneuver training centers, or in other contingency operations, could have prepared them for what they faced in BiH. The Army did a tremendous job of rapidly developing training scenarios based on lessons learned from units that served as part of the United Nations Protection Forces in BiH, in order to prepare US soldiers and leaders for what they would encounter once deployed. Additionally, senior military leaders were under tremendous pressure from US civilian leadership to accomplish the mission and protect the troops, with little or no room for error. The pressure from US domestic politics, as well as the unforgiving toughness of BiH, created an environment that few leaders could be expected to tolerate, but many did.

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<sup>1</sup>Dr. Jeffrey Record, [Force-Protection Fetishism. Sources, Consequences, and (?) Solutions], *Aerospace Power Journal*, Vol 14 No. 2 (Summer 2000): 5. In this article, Dr. Record argues that America has become a nation obsessed with protecting its military and avoiding casualties.

<sup>2</sup>Headquarters, Department of the Army, FM 100-5, *Operations* (Washington DC: US Government Printing Office, 14 June 1993), 1-3. The Army's keystone doctrinal guide describes the American way of war, and the special relationship that exists between the American people and the Army. Part of that relationship is based on the fact that the Army must reflect the unique values of the United States.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, 1-1.

<sup>4</sup>Headquarters, Department of the Army, FM 101-5-1, *Operational Terms and Graphics* (Washington DC: US Government Printing Office, 30 September 1997), 1-69.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup>Headquarters, Department of the Army, FM 100-23, *Peace Operations* (Washington DC: US Government Printing Office, 30 December 1994), 36.

## CHAPTER 2

### BACKGROUND TO THE CONFLICT IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Fundamental to understanding the context of US force protection policy and its relationship to mission accomplishment in BiH is an understanding of the events of the late 1980s and early 1990s in Yugoslavia and the rest of the world's reaction to Yugoslavia's collapse. The violence and conflict in the region ultimately led to the deployment of a NATO-led military force to enforce a peace agreement designed to bring the stability necessary for a lasting peace.

In the second half of the 1980s, the United States transitioned from a Cold War balance of power strategy on the European Continent to the present Strategy of Engagement<sup>1</sup>. For nearly one-half of the twentieth century, Europe had been forcibly divided with NATO and the Warsaw Pact on opposite sides of a large military standoff known as the Cold War. For those born after the end of World War II, a divided Europe was a natural part of the world--something that always existed, and would probably continue to exist. In the mid 1980s East-West European differences were overshadowed by new political, environmental, and economic problems that rendered the division of Europe less relevant. Mikhail Gorbachev, the Russian leader, publicly acknowledged that the rationale of the Cold War was unrealistic. In his compilation of essays entitled, At a Century's End: Reflections, 1982-1995, George F. Kennan, concluded that the world had finally recovered from World War II, and a new age had arrived, one that would bring new problems with it.<sup>2</sup>

The most symbolic event at the end of the Cold War occurred on 9 November 1989 when the border between East and West Berlin was opened, and within days the

demolition of the Berlin Wall began.<sup>3</sup> The Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE), one of NATO's two major military commands, the other being Allied Command Atlantic (ACLANT), began to redefine its role as preserving peace and promoting stability rather than countering the Warsaw Pact threat.<sup>4</sup> NATO was in the process of this change when hostilities began in Yugoslavia.

From 1986 through the arrival of NATO peacekeeping forces in December 1995, the situation in Yugoslavia was a string of violent confrontations that escalated in to outright war in the spring of 1992. One dark aspect of the conflict was widespread inhumane treatment of noncombatant civilians. Much public and scholarly debate related to the 1992-95 wars in Yugoslavia is concerned with identifying the roots of the ethnic divisions, and the beginning of the conflict. For the purpose of understanding the environment in which NATO-led peacekeepers now operate, this study will begin with the rebirth of Serb nationalism in the second half of the 1980s.<sup>5</sup>

In 1986, the same year that Soviet President Gorbachev and US President Ronald Reagan were conducting unprecedented talks in Reykjavik, Iceland, toward long-term solutions for East-West peace, the Belgrade newspaper, *Vecernje Novosti*, published a little-noticed memorandum. A number of Serbian academics authored the memorandum, which contained a list of nationalist grievances. The memorandum asserted that Serbs "were the victims of economic and political discrimination by their Croat and Slovene countrymen."<sup>6</sup> It went on to say that the "Serbs had made the greatest military contribution"<sup>7</sup> in the First and Second World Wars, yet were being punished for it in peacetime, and that the Serb minority in Kosovo, the republic's southern province, was facing complete genocide. The 74 pages of grievances accused Croatia and Slovenia of

deliberately conspiring against Serbia.<sup>8</sup> Six years after the death of Josip Broz Tito, the leader of Yugoslavia since the end of World War II, the Yugoslav government had not yet found a solution for effectively governing its six decentralized republics--Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Slovenia. The memorandum, which caused little concern outside of the Balkans, had a greater effect in Yugoslavia and helped turn the region into the largest risk to peace and stability in Europe.

Although the nationalistic memorandum created outrage among many Communist leaders in Serbia, one man initially remained silent--Slobodan Milosevic, the head of the Serbian Communist Party. In April 1987, Serbian President Ivan Stambolic sent Milosevic to meet with the Kosovar leaders concerning the tension between the Kosovo Albanian majority and the Serb minority, in order to calm the situation. Ironically, this trip signaled the beginning of a deliberate effort by Milosevic to unseat his lifelong friend, Stambolic, as president of Serbia. During his visit to Kosovo, Milosevic sided with the Serb minority, and instead of calming the situation, he created more tension. As Milosevic delivered a stirring speech to his fellow Serbs, the crowd roared their approval and the Serbian revolt against the Yugoslav federation began. Milosevic became the symbol around whom oppressed Serbs rallied to express their discontent.<sup>9</sup>

Prior to 1990, Milosevic's goal was to "gain control over Yugoslavia through the existing structures of the Communist Party and the federal government."<sup>10</sup> Beginning in September 1987 and ending with President Stambolic's dismissal in December 1987, Milosevic conducted a well-planned coup to take over the Serbian presidency. During meetings of the Serbian Central Committee, Milosevic challenged President Stambolic's

claim to the presidency and successfully unseated him, claiming the presidency for himself. Most leaders of the other Yugoslav republics accepted and even openly approved of Milosevic's actions.<sup>11</sup> After this success, he wasted little time before he began to promote and export Serb nationalism beyond the republic of Serbia. He politically weakened the autonomous governments of Kosovo and Vojvodina, and amended the Serbian constitution to permit Serbia to annex both those republics, which occurred in September 1990.<sup>12</sup>

These bold and ambitious actions by Milosevic fueled a nationalistic reaction in other Yugoslav republics, particularly Slovenia and Croatia, the most geographically western and most culturally westernized of the Yugoslav republics. Beginning in 1989, these two republics took a number of steps to protect themselves from the growing political control that Milosevic was asserting over Yugoslavia. In the autumn of 1989, Slovenia created a new constitution that provided itself with legislative sovereignty and the right to secede from Yugoslavia. In January of 1990 the Slovenian Communists left the Yugoslav Communist Party and renamed themselves the Party of Democratic Renewal. In the spring of 1990, both Slovenia and Croatia held multiparty elections in which the Communist Parties were defeated. Finally, in June of 1991 the legislatures of both Slovenia and Croatia declared their independence. The political, ethnic, and cultural tension between Slovenia and Croatia on one hand and Serbia on the other increased dramatically over this period of time.<sup>13</sup>

The declaration of independence in Slovenia and Croatia caused Milosevic to realize that his goal of controlling Yugoslavia by political means using the existing government and Communist party structure was not achievable. Faced with the

realization that he could not control all of Yugoslavia as a single entity, he adopted a policy to create a greater Serbian territory that he alone would control. While he did not oppose any republic leaving Yugoslavia, he opposed the idea of Serbs native to those republics being forced out against their will. Soon after the declaration of independence, the Serb-dominated Yugoslav People's Army (JNA) tried but failed to take control of Slovenian border control points. This two-week period of violence resulted in the first involvement by the international community. In July, the European Community (EC) helped negotiate the first of what would become many ceasefires, and it established a monitoring mission in Slovenia.<sup>14</sup>

As soon as the Slovenians, with the help of the EC, suppressed the crisis there, violence began in the Knin region of Croatia. It is worthwhile to examine what took place in Knin during the summer of 1990, because it is the first example of what would later become a favorite tactic for the Serbs in BiH and would also become a fundamental part of the environment in which NATO peacekeeping forces operated. The majority of the population of the Knin were Serbs. Just prior to the April elections in Croatia, Serbs in the Knin area organized themselves into the Serbian Democratic Party (SDS) out of fear that they would lose their cultural identity to extreme Croatian nationalists. Although they began as a locally organized group, by the summer of 1990 an extreme loyalist close to Milosevic was leading the SDS. Between August 1990 and January 1991, the Knin Serbs defied the Croatian government and declared themselves autonomous; armed Serb militias aided by the Serb-dominated JNA garrison commanded by Lieutenant Colonel and later General Ratko Mladic began to appear; Croatian authorities tried to confiscate reserve police force arms supplies and placed civil

restrictions on the people; and Serb loyalists influenced by Serbian leaders encouraged and organized Serb civil disobedience. Violent riots resulted, and Serbian leaders began to refer to the area as the Serb Autonomous Region of the Krajina, and the federal Yugoslav presidency ordered the very same army that was supplying the Serb militias to restore peace. Eventually Serbs would control about one-third of the entire republic of Croatia that included a major portion of Knin.<sup>16</sup>

The Serb majority used three primary tactics in Knin--mobilizing the Serb population of Knin through propaganda, forcing uncommitted villages to become involved in resisting Croatian authorities, and creating incidents that would cause the JNA to intervene. The Serbs used these same tactics, which are more closely associated with insurgent techniques rather than conventional military operations, later in BiH.<sup>17</sup> In the first of these tactics, Serbia flooded Knin with biased information through the media and local politicians to create fear and dissatisfaction among the Knin Serbs toward the Croatian government. Propaganda claimed that President Franjo Tudjman's government was conducting a campaign of terror against the Serbs. Secondly, the Serbs staged violent incidents against Croatian authorities in towns that were not loyal to the Serb cause. The Croatians then placed restrictions on the town and in some cases sought reprisals. It should be understood that the Croatian control measures were often inhumane, which legitimized Serb propaganda. In response, loyalist Serbs often moved into these towns, armed and organized the population, and formed militias to protect the towns against police attacks. If police arrived, Serb loyalists sometimes started a firefight, and the town would then commit to the Serb cause. Last, Serb loyalists and militias created incidents so large that the JNA would be called in to restore peace. The

JNA officer corps was mostly comprised of Serbs loyal to Milosevic, and cooperated with and supplied Serb loyalists and militias.<sup>18</sup>

As noted earlier, Yugoslavia did not effectively govern its six decentralized republics, and this failure was reflected in the manner in which the Federal Presidency functioned. The Yugoslav constitution called for an eight-member presidency comprised of representatives from each of the six republics, Croatia, BiH, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Slovenia; and the two provinces Kosovo and Vojvodina. Each year on 15 May, the position of president rotated to a different republic--the rotation was established in the early 1970s. From May 1990 until May 1991 the president was the Serbian representative, Borisav Jovic. In May 1991, the position was due to go to the Croatian, Stipe Mesic. However, prior to May 1991, a series of political events essentially dissolved the already weak Yugoslav presidency: Slovenian and Croatian independence, Serbia absorbing Kosovo and Vojvodina, and the resignation of the representatives to the presidency from Serbia, Montenegro, and Vojvodina. Serbia announced that it would no longer recognize the authority of the Yugoslav presidency. The JNA could only be deployed by the Yugoslav presidency, and even though many officers of the JNA were loyal Serbs, the JNA was still the Yugoslav federal army. While the Serbs were carving out the Knin region of Croatia for themselves in the second half of 1990, and the JNA was called in to restore peace, it was the Serb representative to the presidency who was serving as the rotational Yugoslav president. From this point on, the JNA, which was garrisoned throughout Yugoslavia, took its orders from Serbia.<sup>19</sup>

Violence and conflict continued to escalate in western Yugoslavia with the Serbs having the upper hand because of the control they exercised over the JNA. With

international attention growing, and calls within the EC to recognize Croatia and Slovenia as independent nations in order to stop Serb aggression, Serbia surprisingly requested a UN-armed peacekeeping force to oversee a recent cease-fire with Croatia. Milosevic may have feared international isolation, or wanted what was left of the severe Balkan winter to refit and reorganize his military and paramilitary forces. In February 1992 a UN Protection Force (UNPROFOR) was established in Croatia. In order to effectively command and control the tenuous peacekeeping operation in Croatia, UNPROFOR selected a secure site well away from ongoing hostilities to establish its headquarters--Sarajevo. The arrival of UNPROFOR ironically coincided with the outbreak of war in BiH.<sup>20</sup>

Unlike the ethnically dominated republics of Serbia and Croatia, the ethnic balance of BiH's population was more even--41 percent Muslim, 35 percent Serb, and 20 percent Croat. This most ethnically balanced of all of Yugoslavia's republics literally found itself in the middle of two opposing forces--Serbia to the east and Croatia to the west. Like Slovenia and Croatia, the Communist Party in BiH disappeared with elections in December of 1990 that resulted in an assembly reflecting the ethnic makeup of the republic. Of the 240 assembly seats, 99 belonged to Muslims, 85 to the Serbs, and 49 to the Croats.<sup>21</sup> Similar to the complicated Yugoslav Federal Presidency, BiH also had a rotating presidency, but instead of six members, it had seven. Alija Izetbegovic became the president in November 1990. Izetbegovic, a Muslim interested in preserving BiH's multicultural and multireligious character, was unlike other Yugoslav leaders in that he had never been a Communist.<sup>22</sup>

The first ethnic incident occurred in BiH about the same time as the first violent incidents in Knin, Croatia--September 1990. Muslim-Serb clashes occurred in the ethnically mixed border town of Foca along the Drina River, the border between BiH and Serbia. Both Muslims and Serbs accused each other of trying to push rival ethnic families out of the town. Observers later used the term “ethnic cleansing” to describe this practice on a larger scale.<sup>23</sup>

Serbs used the same tactics to mobilize the passions of the Serb population in BiH that they used in Knin. Similar to Knin, they used propaganda to create fear among the Bosnian Serb population. This time the threat was Islamic fundamentalism rather than extremist Croatian authorities. The Serb Democratic party in BiH, led by Radovan Karadzic, the ranking Serb member of the BiH assembly, declared areas of BiH Serb autonomous. There was also evidence that Serbia was supplying arms and ammunition to the Bosnian Serbs and that Karadzic took his orders from Milosevic.<sup>24</sup>

In October 1991, BiH declared its sovereignty through a vote that the Serb members of the assembly boycotted. Serbia followed with its own declaration of sovereignty in January 1992, and war between the two former republics became imminent.<sup>25</sup> The conflict in BiH, as well as Croatia, began with low intensity insurgent-style operations and soon escalated to a clash of organized armies.

Over the next few years the war continued in a manner that was eerily reminiscent of the Balkan War of 1913.<sup>26</sup> Common to both wars was the widespread inhumane treatment of the enemy without much differentiation between combatants and non-combatants. The most common tactic consisted of destroying the villages of rival ethnic groups by regular army units, paramilitary organizations, and bands of criminal thugs

with the purpose of driving the opposing ethnic populations away from their native land. This tactic became commonly known as ethnic cleansing, and it was the primary method that warring factions used to solidify their claim to territory. Other inhumane and criminal activities, often part of ethnic cleansing, included the rape of women belonging to rival ethnic groups, execution style killings, and the control of rival ethnic populations by establishing concentration camps. Evidence indicates that leaders among all three factions condoned inhumane conduct and in some cases actually directed it.<sup>27</sup>

The war in BiH did not evade the interest and concern of Western Europe and the United States. Various diplomatic peacemaking efforts existed throughout the fighting from the spring of 1992 through December 1995. A brief look at two of the agreements is useful to understanding the ethnic and political makeup of BiH. In March of 1992, the EC convened a conference in Lisbon that succeeded in getting the BiH leadership to agree that Bosnia and Herzegovina “would become an independent confederation of three ethnic units headed by a common central government.”<sup>28</sup> Although the entire agreement did not last past an effort to determine actual ethnic communities, the three BiH factional leaders, Izetbegovic, Radovan Karadzic, the head of the Serbian Democratic Party, and Mate Boban, the head of the Croatian Democratic Union, accepted the existing external boundaries of BiH. This agreement helped create the trifaction formula that would be the basis for the future structure of BiH.

The second agreement was a result of the informal military alliance that the Croats and Muslims formed in 1992 as the only means of defending themselves against Serb aggression.<sup>29</sup> During March 1994 in Washington District of Columbia, Presidents Tudjman and Izetbegovic signed a draft constitution to combine Muslims and Croats of

BiH into one Federation. They would combine their armies and have a central government in Sarajevo. Bosnian Serbs were invited to join them, however, they weren't involved in the discussions. One aspect of the agreement that would complicate the environment for NATO peacekeepers was that the Croat-Muslim Federation was tenuous at best, and was based on self-preservation against a common enemy rather than common goals for the future of the Federation.<sup>30</sup>

While UNPROFOR saved countless lives by protecting aid convoys, it was never resourced or directed to prevent violence between warring factions. An unintended, negative aspect of the humanitarian effort was that a portion of the aid intended for displaced civilians was taken by belligerent, combatant organizations, often by force, and used to sustain the military and paramilitary units that were carrying out the inhumane violence. Proof of UNPROFOR's difficult situation was as subtle as passive defiance of negotiated cease-fires, and as overt as peacekeepers being attacked, taken prisoner, or killed. Tensions rose, not only between the warring factions, but also between the factions and UNPROFOR.<sup>31</sup> By the time summer arrived in 1995, the peacekeeping effort began to take on a different nature--one that permitted the peacekeepers to protect themselves by fighting back.

Because print and broadcast news organizations closely covered the war in BiH, developed areas of the world could not avoid hearing of atrocities such as the infamous mass murder of the Muslim men in Srebrenica by the Serbs as UN peacekeepers stood helplessly aside.<sup>32</sup> Public opinion demanded that something be done to stop the killing, and events such as the one in Srebrenica increased the pressure on world leaders to find an end to the war in BiH.

At the same time that world leaders were desperately searching for ways to bring peace to BiH, NATO was promoting its new purpose, one of preserving peace and stability in Europe. NATO, an alliance with an integrated military staff that worked for a well-established political structure, naturally found itself drawn towards a military solution to the war in BiH.

Three events were significant in establishing a peacekeeping role for NATO in BiH. First, NATO began developing contingency plans in early 1993 to conduct peace-enforcement operations in BiH to support the Vance-Owen Plan.<sup>33</sup> The Vance-Owen plan failed because it was ultimately rejected by the Serbs. Second, in October 1992, UN Resolution 781 banned all non-UN-authorized flights over BiH; however, it did not approve an effective means to enforce the ban. UNPROFOR could only monitor airfields and report violations of the resolution banning flights.<sup>34</sup> Clearly, NATO could provide the force necessary to enforce the no-fly zone. Third, in March 1993, UN resolution 810 authorized NATO aircraft to shoot down planes that violated the ban.<sup>35</sup> Eleven months later, NATO aircraft began to enforce the no-fly zone by shooting down six Serbian warplanes that had bombed a hospital and an ammunition factory and storage area in Muslim-held territory.<sup>36</sup>

A perception among Europeans that the US was unwilling to place its ground forces in danger in order to enforce a peace agreement in BiH, was significant in creating the character of the multinational, NATO-led peace keeping force. US diplomats had consistently supported and promoted the use of air strikes against warring factions, primarily the Serbs, as a solution to stop the fighting in BiH. However, the US was reluctant to contribute ground forces to a NATO peacekeeping contingent until the

United Kingdom threatened to pull their own ground forces out of a potential peacekeeping force if the US would not join them. France and the United Kingdom saw the US support of air strikes, and reluctance to use their own ground forces, as an unwillingness to take the necessary risks to bring peace to the region. From the European perspective, US airpower would do the killing, and European ground forces would do the dirty work that would certainly include casualties.<sup>37</sup>

In August of 1995, a tragic incident in Sarajevo cleared the way for the UN and NATO to authorize air strikes against selected ground targets. On 28 August, a single mortar round, attributed to the Serbs, was fired into a Sarajevo marketplace killing 38 civilians, and on 30 August, NATO “commenced a sustained air campaign against Serb positions and facilities throughout Bosnia.”<sup>38</sup>

Two key diplomatic decisions led to the approval of NATO air strikes. As previously stated, the US had believed for some time that military air strikes were a desired solution to the problems in BiH. Naturally, when the market mortar attack occurred the US again called for air strikes. The obstacles to NATO air strikes were the UN and NATO--both would have to approve to establish any sort of international legitimacy. On the morning of 29 August, UN Deputy Secretary-General Kofi Annan ordered UN civil and military officials to temporarily relinquish their veto power over air strikes in BiH. Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Gali was on board a commercial flight from New York to Europe and could not be reached. This gave NATO the sole authority for an air strike decision. NATO Secretary-General Willy Claes essentially opened the door for air strikes with a bureaucratic decision. Instead of organizing a formal meeting of NATO, he simply informed NATO members that he had directed

General George Joulwan, the Supreme Allied Commander Europe to take appropriate military action in response to the mortar attack in Sarajevo. NATO began its largest military action in its history, Operation Deliberate Force, at 2:00 A.M. local time on 30 August, 1995.<sup>39</sup>

NATO air strikes were continuous throughout the first half of September 1995, and during this same time, the strategic balance in Bosnia shifted significantly. The combined armies of the Croat-Muslim Federation conducted a combined offensive in northeast Bosnia and recaptured 4,000 square kilometers of territory. There was a distinct possibility that the conflict in Bosnia would escalate and spread beyond its borders. The Serbs had just lost a great deal of land, and could expect more NATO aerial bombardment. The Croats and Muslims were keen on keeping the territorial gains from their combined military operations. The time never seemed better to negotiate some sort of comprehensive peace plan.

Finding a lasting solution to the problems in BiH was the highest priority for the UN, NATO, and the US in September and October of 1995. Diplomats worked endlessly to get the leaders of the three warring factions to the negotiation table with a feasible plan for peace, and NATO military planners revised and fine-tuned their plans for a NATO peacekeeping force. In the US, domestic politics posed the biggest obstacle that the Clinton administration faced when developing solutions for maintaining the peace in BiH, if and when an agreement was reached between the warring factions. The US Congress was not particularly keen about sending US ground forces to BiH as part of a NATO peacekeeping force, especially considering that the memory of dead American peacekeepers in Somalia, was still fresh in the minds of most Americans.<sup>40</sup> The US

Congress would not vote to support the Clinton administration until the day before the actual signing of a peace agreement, and only the Senate supported the policy--the House of Representatives voted to support the troops while opposing the policy. Congress also placed a one year limit on funding for the mission, giving the American people a sense that the mission would be completed in a year.<sup>41</sup> US domestic political debate was still ongoing when on 1 November 1995 the Bosnian Muslim, Croatian, and Serbian leadership began formal peace talks at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base near Dayton, Ohio.

After three weeks of negotiations, the presidents of Bosnia, Croatia, and Serbia settled on a General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia (GFAP). This pact became more commonly known as the Dayton Peace Accord (DPA). As a result of the agreement, Bosnia and Herzegovina would remain a single state with one capitol and internationally recognized borders, but it would consist of two entities. One entity, the Serb Republic, would control 49 percent the territory, and the second entity, the Muslim-Croat Federation, would control 51 percent of the territory including Sarajevo, the capital.

On 14 December 1995 Presidents Milosevic of Serbia, Tadjman of Croatia, and Izetbegovic of BiH signed the DPA in Paris. In addition to the territorial separation of the entities, the DPA designated a 60,000 man NATO-led Implementation Force (IFOR) to stabilize the region. Unlike UN peacekeepers, who had the right of self-defense only, IFOR operated under more robust rules of engagement, or ROE. In accordance with Annex 1A, Agreement on the Military Aspects of the Peace Settlement of the DPA, IFOR had the right to use whatever military force was necessary to force the factions to comply

with the agreement they all signed.<sup>42</sup> On 20 December 1995 the transfer of authority from UNPROFOR to IFOR took place, and NATO thus began conducting the first real military ground operation in Europe since the end of World War II.

Yugoslavia is a land of complicated problems that require equally complicated solutions, and even the most basic discussion of the nature of the conflict in BiH is difficult for the average American to understand. Out of the preceding background discussion, there are three important and fairly clear aspects of the environment in which NATO peacekeepers entered in December 1995. One, the conflict in BiH went beyond conventional armies fighting conventional battles against one another. The conflict included a myriad of unconventional warfare activities with little or no differentiation between combatants and noncombatants, and included tactics associated more with an insurgency rather than a declared war conducted in accordance with the Geneva Convention.<sup>43</sup> Two, the signatories of the DPA, the leaders of the three warring factions, did not embrace peace with enthusiasm. The leaders of the warring factions, especially the Serbs, were pressured into signing a peace agreement that was the best choice from among a number of bad choices. Three, leaders of NATO member nations, especially the Americans, only reluctantly agreed to send peacekeeping forces to BiH to enforce the DPA, and in so doing, prevent renewed hostilities.

In December 1995, US forces, as part of a larger NATO-led, peacekeeping force, took responsibility for an environment that was not easily understood. BiH was filled with a variety of threats that could take the region back toward war. IFOR was initially occupied with the responsibility of separating conventional armies who had agreed to stop fighting, but there also existed a number of unconventional impediments to peace

and stability. This unconventional dimension of the environment became the greatest challenge for a lasting peace in BiH. Also, in 1995, the average American citizen did not understand the basic problems in BiH or the reasons for a peacekeeping force, and many viewed the conflict as a humanitarian problem. With the Somalia tragedy still in their minds, Americans, especially members of Congress, were not anxious to see US troops in harm's way. An American lack of understanding for the circumstances in BiH, US domestic casualty sensitivities, political pressure to get the job done quickly, and a complex, volatile environment all combined to create a unique, unprecedented challenge for US military forces in BiH.

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<sup>1</sup>The White House, *A National Security Strategy for a New Century* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1999), 3.

<sup>2</sup>George F. Kennan, *At a Century's End: Reflections, 1982-1995* (New York-London: W.W. Norton & Company, 1997), 148-155.

<sup>3</sup>Burkhard Kirste, *The Berlin Wall*, available from <http://userpage.chemie.fu-berlin.de/BIW/wall.html> Internet, accessed 30 October 2000, p. 2 of 3.

<sup>4</sup>SHAPE Homepage. *SHAPE at a Glance*, available from <http://shape.nato.int/welcome.htm> Internet, accessed 30 October 2000, p. 1 of 2.

<sup>5</sup>This background primarily, but not exclusively, uses three texts and a chronology to establish historical events related to the conflict in BiH. Noel Malcolm, *Bosnia: A Short History* (New York: New York University Press, 1994); Laura Silber and Allan Little, *Yugoslavia: Death of a Nation* (NY: TV Books, Inc., distributed by Penguin USA 1996); Elinor C. Sloan, *Bosnia and the New Collective Security* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 1998); and Dr. Timothy L. Sanz, [The Yugoslav Conflict: A Chronology of Events], (Foreign Military Studies Office, US Army Combined Arms Command, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas: *Military Review*, December 1992), 3.

<sup>6</sup>Silber and Little, *Yugoslavia Death of a Nation*, 31.

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*, 31-32.

- <sup>9</sup>Robert D. Kaplan, *Balkan Ghost* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993), 38-39.
- <sup>10</sup>Malcolm, *Bosnia: A Short History*, 215.
- <sup>11</sup>Silber and Little, *Yugoslavia*, 40-47.
- <sup>12</sup>Malcolm, *Bosnia*, 211-212.
- <sup>13</sup>Sloan, *Bosnia and the New Collective Security*, 14.
- <sup>14</sup>Malcolm, *Bosnia*, 214-215; Sloan, *Bosnia and the New Collective Security*, 14; and Sanz, *The Yugoslav Conflict: A Chronology of Events*, 3.
- <sup>15</sup>Malcolm, *Bosnia*, 214-215, 229; and Sloan, *Bosnia and the New Collective Security*, 14-16.
- <sup>16</sup>Hugh Poulton, *The Balkans, Minorities and States in Conflict* (London: Minority Rights Publications, 1991), 24-27; and Malcolm, *Bosnia*, 215-216.
- <sup>17</sup>Bard E. O'Neill, *Insurgency & Terrorism, Inside Modern Revolutionary Warfare* (Brassey's Inc., 1990), 24-27, 31-50; and "Support For Insurgency And Counterinsurgency," in Department of the Army, FM 25-100, *Military Operations in Low Intensity Conflict*, available from <http://www.adtdl.army.mil/cgi-bin/atdl.dll/fm/100-20>.
- <sup>18</sup>Branka Magas, *The Destruction of Yugoslavia: Tracking the Break-up, 1980-92* (London and New York: Verso, 1993), 292-294, 301, 313-314, 316; Malcolm, *Bosnia*, 216-217; and Poulton, *The Balkans, Minorities and States in Conflict*, 24-27.
- <sup>19</sup>Magas, *The Destruction of Yugoslavia*, 291-293.
- <sup>20</sup>Elinor C. Sloan, *Bosnia and the New Collective Security*, 15, 16; and Malcolm, *Bosnia*, 241.
- <sup>21</sup>Malcolm, *Bosnia*, 222-223.
- <sup>22</sup>Edgar O'Ballance, *Civil War in Bosnia, 1992-94* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), 6; Ed Vulliamy, *Seasons in Hell* (New York: St. Martin's Press 1994), 41. Malcolm, *Bosnia*, 218-219.
- <sup>23</sup>O'Ballance, *Civil War in Bosnia, 1992-94*, 5-6.
- <sup>24</sup>Malcolm, *Bosnia*, 217, 224-225.
- <sup>25</sup>O'Ballance, *Civil War in Bosnia, 1992-94*, 7, 9.

<sup>26</sup>Kennan, *At a Century's End, 1982-1995*, 282-299.

<sup>27</sup>Leo Tindemans et al., *Unfinished Peace, Report of the International Commission on the Balkans* (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1996), 40; Vulliamy, *Seasons in Hell*, 85-98; and Malcom, *Bosnia*, 224-225, 238. Malcom states that Serb operations in BiH were supplied from Serbia and directed by Serbian President Milosevic. Vulliamy presents his own eyewitness account of the atrocities of the war in BiH.

<sup>28</sup>O'Ballance, *Civil War in Bosnia, 1992-94*, 9; Sloan, *Bosnia and the New Collective Security*, 45.

<sup>29</sup>Malcom, *Bosnia*, 240.

<sup>30</sup>O'Ballance, *Civil War in Bosnia, 1992-94*, 241.

<sup>31</sup>Malcom, *Bosnia*, 247.

<sup>32</sup>Kennan, *At a Century's End: Reflections, 1982-1995*; 290-292; and Tindemans et al., *Unfinished Peace, Report of the International Commission on the Balkans*, 41.

<sup>33</sup>O'Ballance, *Civil War in Bosnia, 1992-94*, 152. The Vance-Owen Plan was named for Cyrus Vance, the UN Special Envoy for the BiH peace talks in Geneva, and Lord David Owen, EU Envoy to Geneva and former Foreign Secretary for Great Britain. The plan was made public in October of 1992 as a solution to ending the war in Bosnia. Chapter 8 of O'Ballance's work provides a detailed look at the contents of the plan.

<sup>34</sup>*Ibid.*, 109.

<sup>35</sup>*Ibid.*, 154.

<sup>36</sup>*Ibid.*, 239-240.

<sup>37</sup>*Ibid.*, 247.

<sup>38</sup>Richard Holbrook, *To End a War* (New York: Modern Library Original Paperback, 1999), 94-105; and Sloan, *Bosnia and the New Collective Security*, 74.

<sup>39</sup>*Ibid.*, 99-102.

<sup>40</sup>*Ibid.*, 119, 216-218. Holbrook's view was that US military leaders misread Serb military capabilities and intentions, which led to exaggerated fears concerning casualties.

<sup>41</sup>*Ibid.*, 320.

<sup>42</sup>*The General Framework Agreement, Annex 1A, Agreement on the Military Aspects of the Peace Settlement* available from <http://www.nato.int/ifor/gfa/gfa-an1a.htm> Internet, accessed 3 October 2000, p. 2 of 3.

## CHAPTER 3

### RISK AVERSION AND FORCE PROTECTION DOCTRINE

Before closely examining the relationship between force protection and mission accomplishment in BiH, it is necessary to examine the nature of current sensitivities toward casualties in the US and to look at the origins and influences of current force protection doctrine and policy. This first half of this chapter will focus on examining how American risk aversion effects national security policy. The second half will analyze current force protection doctrine, its origins, and how military operations have influenced the development of force protection doctrine.

The modern American trepidation toward military casualties is usually attributed to the nation's war in Southeast Asia. During the Vietnam War, the nightly network news comparison of friendly versus enemy body count reports is an example of how the US military and the nation began to develop a mind-set of using casualties as a measure of the success of military intervention; after all, casualties are an easy means of quantifying success on the battlefield. A brief background examination of two fairly recent US military operations, Lebanon and Somalia, will provide valuable insight into the most current American casualty aversion.

In August of 1982, US Marines, along with French and Italian forces, comprised a multinational force (MNF) charged with conducting peacekeeping operations in war-torn Lebanon. The MNF mission began with support by all three warring factions, the Syrians, Lebanese, and Israelis, but ended in international embarrassment for the US when 241 Marines lost their lives as a result of a suicide bomber driving a truckload of explosives into their compound.

A brief overview of the events that led to the deployment of an MNF to Lebanon is useful in understanding the nature of the mission there. In the early summer of 1982, the Israeli Defense Forces scored a big victory against the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) by driving them out of northern Israel and into Lebanon. Lebanon itself was in the midst of a struggle between the minority Christian leadership and the majority Muslim population who sympathized with the plight of the PLO. Syria, having long been interested in annexing parts of Lebanon, supported both the Muslim Lebanese and the PLO. This tenuous set of circumstances led to a series of diplomatic efforts to rid Lebanon of all foreign troops and to return the region to peace and stability. The belligerents reached an agreement which permitted the PLO to turn over their heavy weapons and evacuate 15,000 military personnel from Lebanon without interference from the Israelis. The MNF was deployed to the region to enforce this agreement.<sup>1</sup>

The MNF mission initially experienced great success; however, as the situation changed over the period of a year, the mission became murkier and more difficult to explain to the American public. The permissive and cooperative environment that met the MNF when they first arrived rapidly deteriorated to one of violence and often times aggressive actions directed at the peacekeepers.

In August of 1982, the arrival of the US Marines and the rest of the MNF seemed to bring calm to Lebanon. The evacuation and turnover of weapons happened smoothly and quickly, and the Marines left after one month. The same day the Marines departed, however, brought tragedy and chaos to Lebanon. Newly elected President Bashir Gemayel, a Christian leader open to Western influence, was assassinated. The Israeli Army went back into Beirut and allowed Christian forces to enter a Palestinian camp

where they murdered over 700 civilians in reprisal for the president's death. The MNF, including 1,600 US Marines were back in Lebanon within two weeks.<sup>2</sup>

The Marines were placed at the highly vulnerable Beirut International Airport, because it would be easy to supply them and evacuate them if necessary. Over the next year, the civil war in Lebanon intensified. Beginning in July of 1983, the Marines began to sustain casualties as a result of rocket and mortar attacks from the Muslim Lebanese Druze militia in the Shouf Mountains overlooking the airport.<sup>3</sup> Lebanese civilians increasingly harassed Marine patrols, Druze militia directed small-arms gunfire at Marines and Lebanese Army forces in the airport compound, and anti-American sentiment escalated. Over the next few months, firefights between the Druze and the Marines escalated, as well as mortar and rocket attacks on the Marines. During this time, the Marines' use of force was limited to appropriate return fire in order to protect themselves. On 7 September 1983 Marines employed naval gunfire for the first time, and began to more aggressively counter attacks by the Muslim Lebanese. Fighting between the Marines and the Druze continued to escalate throughout the fall, each clearly seeing the other as an enemy force, and Marine attacks included F-14 fighters and increased naval gunfire.<sup>4</sup>

With the violence of the civil war creating chaos in Lebanon and soldiers deserting the worn and defeated Lebanese Christian Army, terrorists struck the Marine headquarters on 23 October 1983 and put the controversy of the Marine presence in Lebanon at the center of US public debate. The debate swirled back and forth between pulling the Marines out of a situation that no military force could fix and the belief that the US cannot back down in the face of terrorism.<sup>5</sup>

The debate continued for a number of months as President Regan, Congress, and the American public tried to determine just what the US was trying to accomplish in Lebanon, and whether it was worth the lives of young Marines. The Reagan administration was having difficulty explaining the purpose of the Marine presence in Lebanon, and political leadership was torn between getting the Marines out of a no-win situation and maintaining credibility with the international community. Feeling that enough time had elapsed since the October bombing to give the appearance that a withdrawal was not tied to intimidation by terrorists, the US pulled the last Marines out of Lebanon in February of 1984 as Beirut was plunged into total chaos.<sup>6</sup>

The Reagan Administration's decision to pull the Marines out of Lebanon in 1983 and 1984 was clearly linked to the 241 Marines who lost their lives because of a suicide bomber. The Lebanon decision is an obvious example of a relationship between American casualties and national security policy decisions. Ironically, almost nine years later to the day the Clinton administration would be faced with a situation similar to the one President Ronald Reagan faced in Lebanon. US military forces were deployed to Somalia with few Americans really understanding why they were there. As in Lebanon, catastrophe struck in a deadly manner and the Clinton Administration attempted to pull American forces out of Somalia without looking like the US was being intimidated.

The 18 October 1993 issue of *Time* magazine showed a cover picture of the weary and battered face of Chief Warrant Officer Michael Durant with the headline--"What in the world are we doing?" Four days of confused fighting in the streets of Mogadishu, Somalia had resulted in sixteen Americans dead, seventy-seven wounded, one held as a

prisoner, and a bewildered American public that for the most part had forgotten that the US even had military forces deployed to the region.<sup>7</sup>

The US military involvement in Somalia began as a noble effort to bring food to a starving nation debilitated by famine. Initially, Somalia and the rest of the world were ecstatic at how quickly and easily a multinational military force designed for combat operations could adapt to provide comfort to those in need. But, over time, the nature of US involvement deteriorated to the point that its main mission was hunting down Somali warlord Mohammed Farrah Aidid and his followers. Many once-grateful Somalis who had viewed the US military as its savior now regarded it with great contempt as an enemy.

How and why the US policy in Somalia turned from that of providing humanitarian aid to hunting international criminals is still unclear. What is clear is that the Clinton administration made the decision to redeploy US forces out of Somalia only after the tragic incident that took the lives of eighteen Americans. Like the Reagan administration in Lebanon, President Clinton's team wanted the US to leave Somalia on its own terms. Initially the US sent additional forces to the region and at the same time announced that all forces would be redeployed from the region within six months.<sup>8</sup>

Defense Secretary Les Aspin, heavily criticized over the poorly suited organization and capabilities of the US forces in Somalia, resigned within three months of the tragedy. President Clinton later admitted that he had not been aware of how inadequately the forces in Somalia were equipped for the mission.<sup>9</sup>

Operations in Lebanon and Somalia are two examples of multinational peacekeeping operations that occurred nine years apart. While the missions were

dissimilar, the forces were of different military services, and the political administrations were different, there is no question that both operations demonstrate that there was a connection between casualties and national security policy. In both situations, the US made decisions to redeploy forces as a result of US casualties. In both instances, casualties raised the public awareness of national policy and forced administrations to explain or fail to explain their objectives for US military forces deployed in harm's way.

Operations in Lebanon and Somalia not only influenced national policy decisions, they influenced force protection doctrine and policy. Military doctrine and actual operations often influence one another. Doctrine obviously provides the common principles that guide the actual actions of military forces, but doctrinal changes often occur as a result of military operations. The second half of this portion of the study will take a close look at current US force protection doctrine and policy. Much of the evolution of force protection doctrine and principles studied during this research occurred after NATO-led operations in BiH began, and therefore doctrine was influenced by operations in BiH as well as earlier missions.

On 25 June 1996 an explosion killed nineteen service members and injured hundreds more at the Khobar Towers complex in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia. Khobar Towers is a Saudi-built compound that served as the residential barracks for 3,000 military personnel from the US, United Kingdom, France, and Saudi Arabia. The military forces were predominantly Air Force and their mission was to enforce the UN-mandated southern no-fly zone imposed on Iraq after the 1991 Persian Gulf War. The explosion was a deliberate act caused by a parked fuel truck rigged with explosives that was detonated next to the compound.<sup>10</sup>

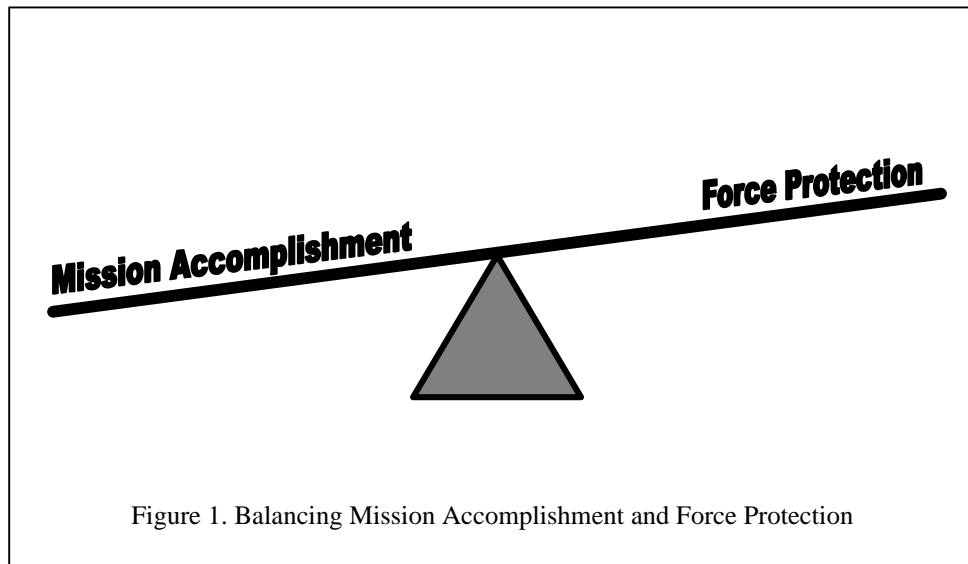
Secretary of Defense William J. Perry responded to the Khobar Towers bombing in three ways. The first was to reevaluate the force posture in the Arabian Gulf region. This led to repositioning forces in Saudi Arabia to more secure, remote areas, and returning service member's families to the US. Second, Secretary Perry directed that all regional commanders-in-chief (CINCs) examine how to deal with a growing threat to deployed US forces. He specifically asked them to answer a number of questions related to evaluating the necessity of troop locations, the suitability of accompanying families, the level of terrorist threats, and the feasibility of host nation cooperation. One question posed to the CINCs seemed to assume that force protection measures would reduce mission effectiveness--"how much should force protection interfere with the mission?"<sup>11</sup> Third, Secretary Perry appointed General Wayne A. Downing, a retired Army officer and former CINC for the United States Special Operations Command, to assess the facts and circumstances surrounding the Khobar Towers incident. The Downing report was delivered to Secretary Perry on 30 August 1996, and the Secretary of Defense forwarded it to the President on 15 September along with his own recommendations.<sup>12</sup>

In his report to the President, Secretary Perry outlined the force protection initiatives of the Department of Defense (DoD) based on the Downing report and input from the regional CINCs. Two aspects of the secretary's report are worth noting as they relate to the development of modern force protection doctrine. The first is the implementation of a DoD standard for force protection, and the second is the secretary's discussion of force protection in relation to mission.

Secretary Perry stated in his report that DoD had issued a variety of documents related to force protection, but the advisory rather than directive nature of the

publications caused confusion in the force. As a remedy, DoD reissued a revised DoD Directive 2000.12, *Combating Terrorism Program*, that implemented previously stated suggestions as a DoD standard to be applied by all commanders. The fundamental tenets of the *Combating Terrorism* directive were incorporated into Joint Publication 3-07.2, *Joint Tactics Techniques and Procedures for Antiterrorism*, published in March of 1998.<sup>13</sup> DoD produced a series of additional publications containing policy, guidance, directives, and standard procedures about the same time--all related to protecting the force against terrorist attacks.<sup>14</sup>

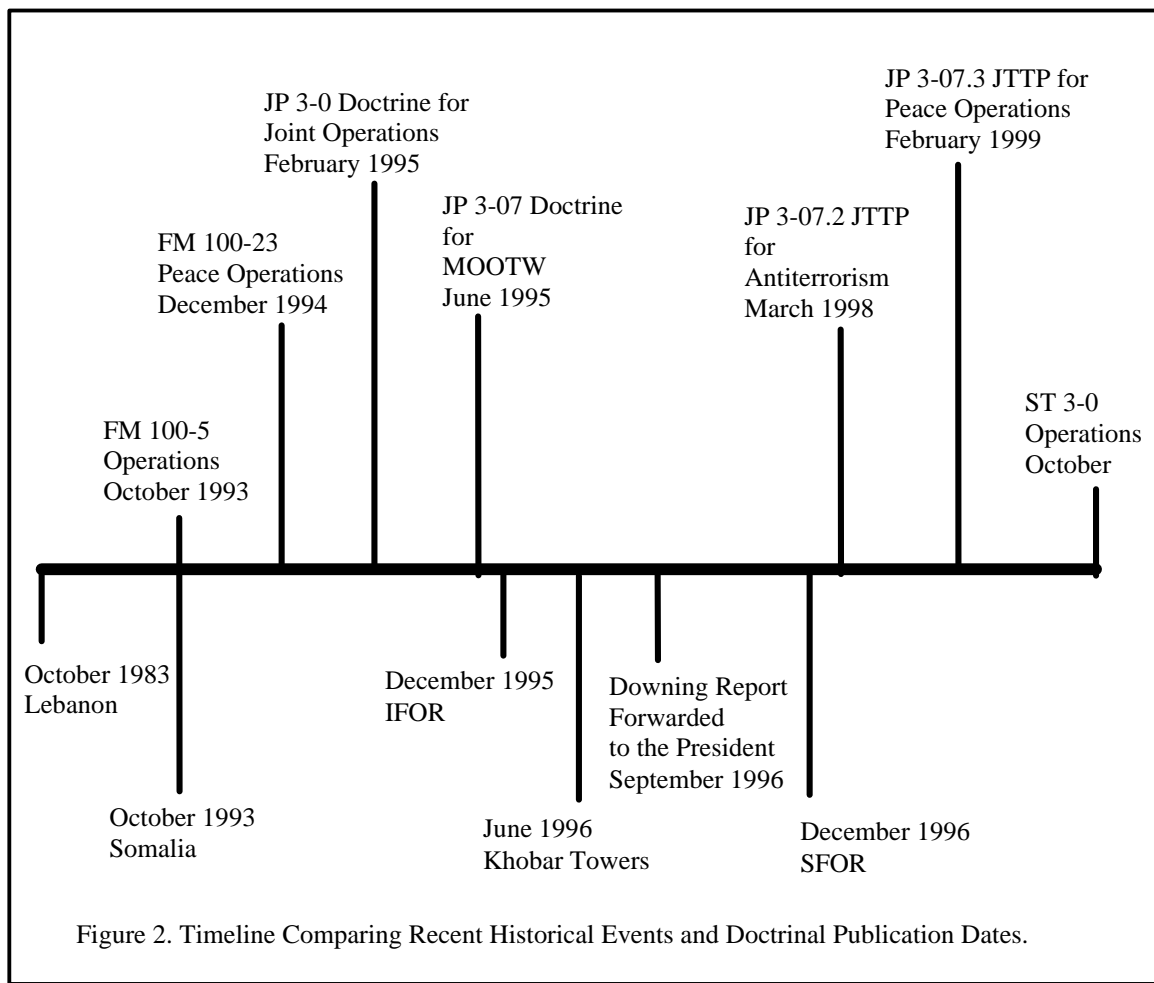
The second interesting aspect of Secretary Perry's report to the President as it related to the development of modern force protection doctrine was his discussion of the interrelationship between mission and force protection. The Secretary viewed force protection as an objective equal to mission accomplishment when he stated that "to stay ahead of the threat, we now see that we must always put force protection up front as a major consideration with key other mission goals as we plan operations, and that parity must be maintained throughout the operation."<sup>15</sup> He added that force protection could degrade mission accomplishment when he stated; "the task of protecting our forces would be easy if we were willing to abandon or compromise our missions, but that is not an option."<sup>16</sup> In his report to the President, the Secretary of Defense clearly viewed force protection and mission accomplishment as being on opposite sides of a scale, with commanders ensuring that the two are balanced. An illustration developed during this research graphically depicts the view of the need to balance force protection and mission accomplishment (figure 1). Placing too much emphasis on one would degrade the effectiveness of the other.



In spite of Khobar Towers, the Downing report, Secretary Perry's force protection initiatives, and the public discussion focused on force protection, a single comprehensive document for US force protection does not exist today. Joint doctrine addresses the separate aspects of force protection in a number of publications. Even though Secretary Perry seemed to view force protection as being nearly equal to other missions, force protection is not viewed as a mission or an operation in joint doctrine.

The first mention of force protection in joint doctrine is Joint Publication (JP) 3-0, *Doctrine for Joint Operations*, which was published in February 1995, and would not have been influenced by DoD's reactions to the Khobar Towers bombing. A timeline developed during this research graphically compares the dates of recent historical events, military operations and the publication of significant doctrinal works related to force protection (figure 2). According to JP3-0, protection is a key consideration in joint operations in war and during military operations other than war.<sup>17</sup> As a principle for joint operations other than war, "security deals principally with force protection against

virtually any person, element or group hostile to our interests.”<sup>18</sup> Chapter V of JP3-0 states that commanders must be always ready to “counter activity that could bring significant harm to units or jeopardize mission accomplishment.”<sup>19</sup> JP 3-07, *Joint Doctrine for MOOTW*, was published in June 1995, and describes security as a principle of MOOTW that includes actions by a friendly force to prevent hostile factions from acquiring a military, political, or informational advantage.<sup>20</sup> Joint doctrine appears to view force protection as an activity that enhances or supports mission accomplishment, rather than Secretary Perry’s view as a major consideration equal to and balanced with mission accomplishment.



Two joint documents published after the Downing report, and after US forces began conducting operations in BiH, differ from the previously discussed publications in that they do not mention an interrelationship between force protection and mission accomplishment. JP 3-07.2, *Joint Tactics and Techniques Publication, JTTP, for Antiterrorism*, published in March 1998, describes antiterrorism as one of the four pillars comprising the broader concept of force protection. The other three pillars are physical security, operations security, and personal protective services. Force protection is defined as “a security program designed to protect Service members, civilian employees, family members, facilities and equipment in all locations and situations, accomplished through planned and integrated application of” the four pillars of the DoD force protection program.<sup>21</sup> The *JTTP for Antiterrorism* discusses the integration of combating terrorism with the other elements of force protection, but does not talk about the integration of antiterrorism with mission accomplishment. JP 3-07.3, *JTTP for Peace Operations*, published in February 1999, details specific techniques to protect personnel without any reference to mission accomplishment and focuses on how units must be prepared to protect personnel against likely threats during peace operations that include terrorism, criminal activity, and mines.<sup>22</sup> There is no mention of force protection supporting mission accomplishment or being balanced with mission accomplishment in either of these manuals published after the Khobar Towers incident, the Downing report, and two years after US operations began in BiH.

In summary, joint doctrine developed before the Khobar towers bombing and US experience in BiH contains a number of references to mission accomplishment and views

force protection as something that better enables an organization to accomplish its mission, or to degrade an adversary's ability to interfere with the mission. Joint doctrine developed after the Khobar towers incident and US operations in BiH contains no references to a relationship between force protection and mission. The absence of any reference to mission in this doctrine seems to reveal that by as early as March 1998, the joint view of force protection evolved into something more important than a supporting element of the mission, and perhaps even an independent mission. Furthermore, Secretary Perry's views of force protection in his September 1996 report to the president should not simply be viewed as a reaction the Khobar towers bombing, but were indicative of the changing views of senior civilian and military leaders since the death of eighteen American soldiers in Somalia in 1993.

Army doctrine, like US joint doctrine, lacked a single comprehensive manual that addressed force protection. In spite of the way force protection and risk aversion seem to be favorite topics of discussion among professional Army officers, even today, no single manual for force protection exists, although one is being written. However, unlike joint doctrine, Army doctrine at the time of BiH operations clearly viewed force protection as being integrated with the mission, and as a means of enhancing a unit's ability to accomplish its mission.

FM 100-5, *Operations*, the Army's keystone doctrinal publication, defines protection as a dynamic of combat power along with maneuver, firepower, and leadership. "Protection conserves the fighting potential of a force so that commanders can apply it at the decisive time and place."<sup>23</sup> The four components of protection, which resemble the four pillars of force protection in joint doctrine in a limited way, are

operations security, protecting the health and morale of soldiers, safety, and avoiding fratricide. Force protection is described as a mission assigned to a supporting effort with the purpose of preserving combat power so that a commander can use combat power at a decisive place and time of his choosing.<sup>24</sup> Clearly the Army views protection as being closely linked to, and enhancing, a unit's ability to accomplish its mission.

In peace operations, as in BiH, the Army also considers the interrelationship between mission and force protection. FM 100-23, *Peace Operations*, defines force protection as something to be considered by commanders when determining how to accomplish a mission with minimal loss to personnel, equipment, and supplies and integrated into all aspects of operational planning and execution. For peace operations, force protection consists of operations security, deception, health and morale, safety, and fratricide avoidance.<sup>25</sup>

Evolving Army doctrine is similar to current doctrine in terms of the relationship between force protection and mission accomplishment. Student Text (ST) 3-0, *Operations*, is not yet approved doctrine, but is a draft of what will become FM 3-0, *Operations*. Like FM 100-5, ST 3-0 *Operations* defines protection as “the preservation of the fighting potential of a force so the commander can apply maximum force at the decisive time and place.”<sup>26</sup> It varies somewhat from FM 100-5 by stating that protection, an element of combat power, has four components--force protection, field discipline, safety, and fratricide avoidance. Evolving Army doctrine appears to go a step beyond current doctrine by acknowledging and addressing the concerns of those in the Army who believe that there is an unnecessary emphasis placed on force protection to the point that it takes priority over the mission. ST 3-0 states:

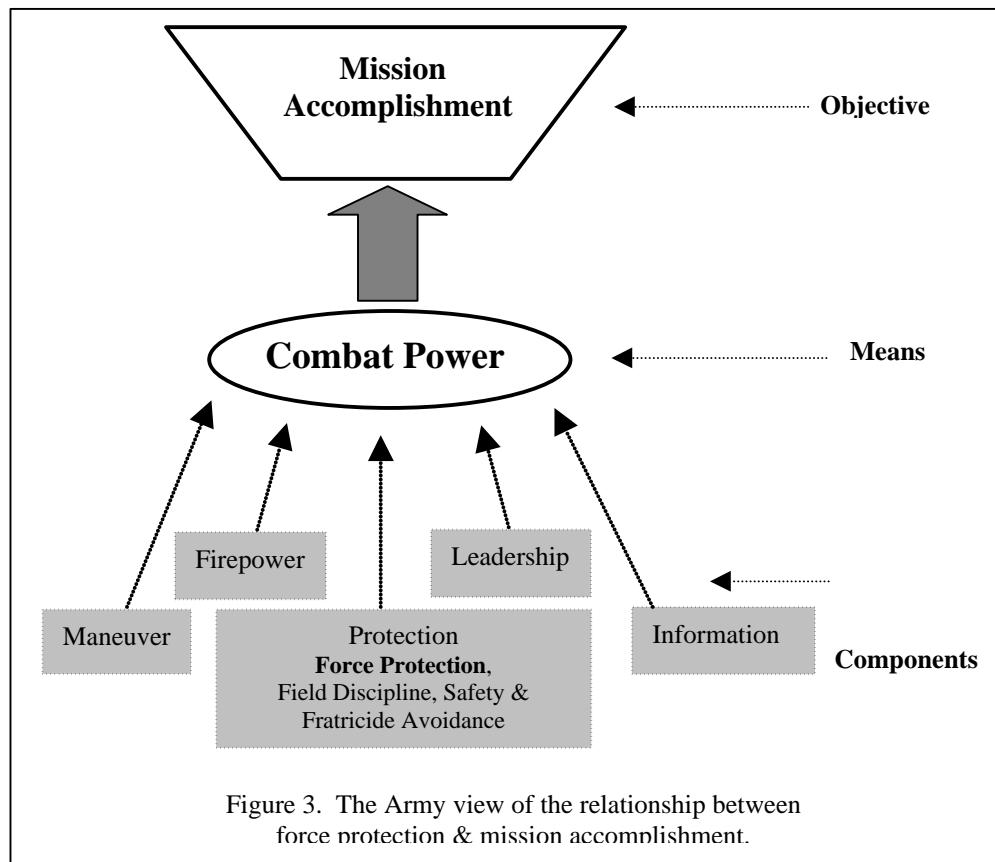
Protection is neither timidity, nor risk avoidance. The Army operates in tough, unforgiving environments where casualties occur. Full spectrum operations create an inherently tense relationship between accomplishing the mission and taking casualties. Accomplishing the mission takes precedence over avoiding casualties. However, soldiers are the most important Army resource, and excessive casualties cripple future mission accomplishment.<sup>27</sup>

ST 3-0 explains that the Army's emphasis on force protection stems from the dominance of the Army over its adversaries in conventional operations. Enemy forces must therefore resort to asymmetric means to challenge the US Army, and force protection counters those asymmetric threats.<sup>28</sup>

The Army is presently working on a single, comprehensive manual that addresses force protection. The Army Combined Arms Center (CAC) at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas is developing a force protection doctrinal manual for the Army. According to Major Greg Thompson, force protection doctrine author at the CAC, the intent of the Army's force protection doctrine is not to create a new and separate system, but to assist leaders in integrating force protection into the already existing military decision making process in order to facilitate mission accomplishment. "The Army's primary mission is to protect the nation; not protect itself," says Major Thompson, "and when the operations process integrates force protection considerations, it becomes more effective by optimizing the combat power of the force with minimum loss of resources."<sup>29</sup>

As US Army planners were preparing for operations in BiH, Army doctrine viewed force protection as something that enabled leaders to more effectively accomplish the mission. Current and emerging Army doctrine shares this same view. Army doctrine views protection, of which force protection is a component, as an element of combat power along with maneuver, firepower, leadership, and in the newest draft of Army operational doctrine, information. The synchronized application of all these elements is

intended to achieve mission accomplishment. A graphical depiction of the synchronized application of combat power was developed for this study (figure 3).



In summary, an examination of the current US sensitivities toward casualties provides valuable evidence of the effects of modern American risk aversion. American risk aversion has had a powerful effect on national security policy. When casualties as a result of military operations in Somalia or Lebanon were combined with a lack of public understanding concerning the mission, US administrations in both cases made decisions to withdraw American forces. This relationship between casualties and national security decisions existed as US forces began to prepare to conduct operations in BiH.

An analysis of force protection doctrine and principles provides insightful evidence that is necessary to study the relationship between force protection and mission accomplishment in BiH. Rather than doctrine directing the conduct of military operations, an analysis of force protection doctrine reveals that military operations are more likely to influence doctrine. As force protection doctrine evolved over the mid-1990's, changes occurred after the US conducted major military operations. The most significant change in force protection doctrine was the elimination of references to mission accomplishment in doctrine developed after Khobar towers, and after the beginning of operations in BiH. One non-doctrinal view, expressed by Secretary Perry in his report to the President concerning Khobar towers, was the notion that force protection can erode mission accomplishment. In spite of all the changes in joint doctrine, and the views of senior US leaders such as Secretary Perry, Army doctrine has remained essentially the same throughout the 1990s. As US forces were preparing to deploy to BiH, Army doctrine viewed force protection as an element of combat power, that when synchronized with firepower, maneuver, and leadership, would enhance a unit's ability to accomplish its mission.

The insights provided by closely examining the nature of American casualty aversion, and the evolution of US force protection policy are, by themselves, useful. However, the true value of these insights will be revealed when they are combined with an examination of the relationship between force protection and mission accomplishment in BiH.

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<sup>1</sup>Esther Scott, *The US Marines in Lebanon* (Case Program, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, President and Fellows of Harvard College, 1991) 2, 3.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 4.

<sup>3</sup>The Druze were one of two Muslim sects, the other being the Shiite, who were waging a civil war against the majority Christian population of Lebanon.

<sup>4</sup>Scott, *The US Marines in Lebanon*, 6; and Benis M. Frank, *U.S. Marines in Lebanon, 1982-1984* (History and Museums Division, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, Washington, DC, 1987), 74-93.

<sup>5</sup>Scott, *The US Marines in Lebanon*, 7.

<sup>6</sup>Frank, *U.S. Marines in Lebanon, 1982-1984*, 137.

<sup>7</sup>George J. Church, *Anatomy of a Disaster*, *Time*, 18 October 1993, 40.

<sup>8</sup>Michael Elliot, "The Making of a Fiasco", *Newsweek*, 18 October 1993, 34.

<sup>9</sup>Kent DeLong and Steven Tuckey, *Mogadishu! Heroism and Tragedy* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers), 99.

<sup>10</sup>William J. Perry, The Secretary of Defense, *Report to the President, The Protection of US Forces Deployed Abroad* [document on-line] available from [http://www.fas.org/irp/threat/downing/report\\_f.html](http://www.fas.org/irp/threat/downing/report_f.html); Internet; accessed 24 August 2000, p. 1-3 of 13.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., 6.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., 6-7.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., 8.

<sup>14</sup>Department of Defense, DoD Directive 2000.12, *DoD Combating Terrorism Program and Joint Publication*, 3-07.2, *Joint Tactics Techniques and Procedures for Antiterrorism*; DoD Instruction 2000.14, *DoD Combating Terrorism Program Procedures*; DoD Directive O-2000.12-H, *Protection of DoD Personnel and Activities Against Acts of Terrorism and Political Turbulence* and DoD Instruction O-2000.16, *Combating Terrorism Program Standards*, *Joint Electronic Library* [CD-ROM] (Washington, DC: J-7, Joint Staff, February 2000). As a result of the Khobar towers incident and the Downing Commission report, a series of publications was developed related specifically to protecting the force against a terrorist attack like the one at Khobar Towers.

<sup>15</sup>Perry, *Report to the President*, 7.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid.

<sup>17</sup>Department of Defense, *Executive Summary*, JP 3-0, *Doctrine for Joint Operations*, Joint Electronic Library [CD-ROM] (Washington, DC: J-7, Joint Staff, February 2000).

<sup>18</sup>Department of Defense, *Chapter V, Military Operations Other Than War*, JP 3-0, *Doctrine for Joint Operations*, Joint Electronic Library [CD-ROM] (Washington, DC: J-7, Joint Staff, February 2000).

<sup>19</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup>Department of Defense, *Chapter II, Principles of Military Operations Other Than War*, JP 3-07, *Joint Doctrine for Military Operations Other Than War*, Joint Electronic Library [CD-ROM] (Washington, DC: J-7, Joint Staff, February 2000).

<sup>21</sup>Department of Defense, *Chapter I, Introduction*, JP3-07.2, *JTTP for Antiterrorism*, Joint Electronic Library [CD-ROM] (Washington, DC: J-7, Joint Staff, February 2000).

<sup>22</sup>Department of Defense, *Chapter II, Peacekeeping Operations and Chapter III Peace Enforcement Operations*, JP3-07.3, *JTTP for Peace Operations*, Joint Electronic Library [CD-ROM] (Washington, DC: J-7, Joint Staff, February 2000).

<sup>23</sup>Headquarters, Department of the Army, FM 100-5, *Operations* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 14 June 1993), 2-10 –2-11.

<sup>24</sup>*Ibid.*, 2-13.

<sup>25</sup>Headquarters, Department of the Army, FM 100-23, *Peace Operations* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 30 December 1994), 36-37.

<sup>26</sup>United States Army Command and General Staff College, Student Text 3-0, *Operations* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: US Government Printing Office, 19 October 2000), 4-8.

<sup>27</sup>*Ibid.*,. It should be noted that this extract from ST 3-0 was not in FM 100-5 at the time of BiH operations between 1995 and 2000.

<sup>28</sup>*Ibid.*,.

<sup>29</sup>Major Tommy Thompson, author, FM 3-07.2, *Force Protection*, interview by author, 8 February 2001, written notes, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.

## CHAPTER 4

### FORCE PROTECTION AND MISSION ACCOMPLISHMENT IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

On 16 December 1995 the infamous Bosnian winter weather prevented US military aircraft from landing at the Tuzla airfield for a third consecutive day. Sixty aircraft carrying personnel and supplies needed to support the 20,000 American soldiers on the way to northeastern BiH had aborted their landings. US Army Major Ryan Yantis explained the cautious deployment by saying that “we [the US Army] are not going to sacrifice troop safety to meet the mission.”<sup>1</sup> His remarks were intended for the American public, and to assure them that the Army does not place its personnel at unnecessary risk. To convey this noble idea of taking care of soldiers, one that is an inherent part of good leadership, MAJ Yantis used the same framework mentioned in the previous chapter of this study--the uncomplementary relationship between protecting the force and accomplishing the mission. His statement implies that no risk is justified, even if that means sacrificing mission accomplishment.

To better understand the relationship between force protection and mission, this chapter examines four aspects of military operations in BiH by US forces. First it defines the mission of US forces in BiH. Second, it examines the initial effects of specific force protection measures on mission accomplishment and the impact that the measures had on the mission after the environment changed. Third, it discusses the effects of US force protection rules on multinational operations. Fourth, it examines how the fundamental view held by US military leaders concerning the relationship between protection and mission undermined mission accomplishment.

The mission of US Army forces in BiH can be described as complicated and difficult at best. One thing for certain is that, like Lebanon and Somalia, understanding why US troops were in BiH was elusive to many Americans. By examining the military aspects of the Dayton Peace Accord (DPA); the United States European Command's (USEUCOM) plans for US forces in BiH; and the views of those assigned to carry out the mission, one can better determine whether force protection really was the mission of US forces in BiH, and, if so, whether it changed as the US presence matured.

The General Framework for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the DPA, is the single authoritative document designed to bring a lasting peace to BiH. The presidents of all three former warring factions signed it and representatives of the US, Britain, France, Germany, and Russia witnessed it. The DPA consists of a basic document and eleven annexes. Annex 1-A, Military Aspects, authorized a multinational, NATO-led Implementation Force (IFOR) to enforce compliance of the military aspects of the agreement, and this annex permitted IFOR to use force as necessary under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter. Chapter VII not only gives military forces the inherent right of self-defense, but also permits the use of such force as necessary to restore peace and stability.<sup>2</sup>

IFOR was responsible for monitoring and enforcing several aspects of Annex 1A of the DPA that included the cease-fire that had been agreed to on October 5, 1995, withdrawal of foreign combatant forces from BiH, withdrawal of all forces of the warring factions outside of a 4 km zone of separation along the Inter-Entity Boundary, and movement of heavy weapons and forces to cantonment areas. The DPA authorized IFOR complete freedom of movement throughout BiH to carry out its mission. Annex 2 of the

DPA established the Inter-Entity Boundary in order to separate the Bosnian Serb Republic and the Croat-Muslim Federation, and this boundary was the basis for the zone of separation.

The IFOR area of operation was sub-divided into three multi-national division (MND) areas--MND-Southeast, MND-Southwest and MND-North. The US was, and still is, responsible for the headquarters of MND-North, which comprised approximately the northeast one-third of BiH. Task Force (TF) Eagle was, and remains, the name of the headquarters responsible for MND-North. The US units that served as this headquarters changed approximately every year. Initially TF Eagle comprised the Headquarters of the 1st Armored Division (AD), two Armor Brigades of the 1st AD, a US Aviation, Artillery, and Engineer Brigade, a Russian Airborne Brigade, a Turkish Brigade, and the NORDPOL Brigade that consisted of units from Norway, Finland, Denmark, Poland, Sweden, Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania.<sup>3</sup>

Before examining the mission of TF Eagle, it is first necessary to look at the USEUCOM operations plan deploying US forces to BiH, which indicated the importance that the Commander in Chief, USEUCOM, and Supreme Allied Commander Europe, placed on force protection. USEUCOM Operations Plan, OPLAN 4243, JOINT ENDEAVOR articulated the CINC's priorities in the Commander's Intent portion of the basic order: "within the confines of mission accomplishment, force protection is my number one priority consistent with mission accomplishment."<sup>4</sup> This guidance, although rather vague, clearly established a relationship between force protection and mission accomplishment. However, the exact nature of the relationship was not clear. Vague and unclear commander's guidance often causes subordinates to be circumspect and to err on

the side of caution. The Force Protection Annex, which should mirror and support the base document of the OPLAN went so far to eliminate any references to mission accomplishment at all. In spite of the vague commander's guidance, the plan clearly emphasized the importance of force protection for US troops deploying to BiH.

The TF Eagle mission not only supported the EUCOM Commander's intent, but considered force protection a mission essential task. A mission essential task is one that must be executed to accomplish the mission. The mission of the forces in MND-North was: "On Order, TF Eagle deploys to SECTOR TUZLA, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and conducts peace enforcement operations to compel compliance with the peace accord; ensures force protection."<sup>5</sup> The inclusion of force protection in the mission statement meant that the commander of TF Eagle felt it was an essential task that must be executed in order to accomplish the mission.<sup>6</sup> The mission statement for TF Eagle therefore identified two mission essential tasks--enforcing the peace and protecting the force. BG Stanley F. Cherrie, who was the Assistant Division Commander for Maneuver in the 1st AD during IFOR, stated in his IFOR mission overview published in *Military Review*:

Paramount to everything we planned and accomplished was a concentration on force protection. We addressed force protection issues in many ways, from uniform policies--flak jackets, helmets and weapons--to forming special staff groups designed to stay abreast of all issues relevant to force protection.<sup>7</sup>

The commander of TF Eagle clearly viewed protecting the force as a mission essential task and included it in his mission statement, and the division's leaders considered it paramount to everything the Task Force did.

For the Army, security and protecting combat power focuses on protecting troops, and has historically been an inherent part of military operations. Army doctrine states

that protecting the force gives commanders the freedom to use their combat power at a decisive point of their choosing, so it is not uncommon for commanders to emphasize the importance of force protection as BG Cherrie did in his lessons learned contribution to *Military Review*. However, including force protection in a unit's mission statement as an essential task is not common. Including force protection in the mission statement of TF Eagle, and the emphasis placed on protecting the force has caused military professionals and observers to conclude that force protection indeed was, and continues to be, the mission of US forces in MND-North. This can be seen in the Bosnia-Herzegovina After Action Review hosted by the United States Army Peacekeeping Institute in May 1996 that concluded, "force protection became a mission rather than an inherent responsibility of command."<sup>8</sup> While force protection was not the only specified mission, it certainly was a critical mission for US troops in MND-North.

It must be noted that force protection policies were strictly national decisions. The emphasis placed on force protection by the EUCOM and TF Eagle commanders only applied to the US units in MND-North, and the forces from other contributing nations had the freedom to determine their own force protection measures.<sup>9</sup> This issue of force protection, and multinational operations will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

As directed by the TF Eagle commander, and in support of the EUCOM commander's intent, initial US forces in MND- North were faced with accomplishing two primary mission essential tasks--peace enforcement and force protection. According to one account, the importance of force protection led to "stringent protection measures

(that) hampered multinational and civil-military cooperation.”<sup>10</sup> But we ask, did these measures truly hamper mission accomplishment?

In spite of some instances of restrictive force protection measures that violated common sense, like running while wearing Kevlar helmets, evidence indicates that the force protection measures implemented by initial US forces in BiH did not hamper mission accomplishment. However, as IFOR made progress and the changing environment demanded more civil-military cooperation, US force protection measures hindered mission accomplishment.

One could argue that TF Eagle could have established the Inter-Entity Boundary more quickly, or that the deployment could have been completed earlier if military aircraft would have attempted to land in the fog at Tuzla. However, between December 1995 and June 1996 TF Eagle did accomplish a great number of tasks associated with peace enforcement in MND-North. The degree of compliance with the DPA and the rate of progress by NATO forces seemed to surprise even the leadership of the 1st AD. Within approximately thirty days, TF Eagle had established a 2 km-wide, 310 km-long zone of separation between former warring factions with controlled routes crossing through the zone with all minefields marked. Within six months, they also supervised the storage of heavy weapons to designated sites, the movement of belligerent forces to cantonment areas, and the demobilization of most of those forces, and the Task Force was postured to provide security for national elections. TF Eagle also assisted the withdrawal of UNPROFOR units, and within its capabilities, safeguarded the movement of civilians and aided humanitarian efforts. It was even argued that the measures used to protect US forces--four-vehicle convoys, weapons at the ready, Kevlar helmets, and the constant

wearing of load carrying equipment--were among the very signals that encouraged factional army commanders to comply with the military aspects of the DPA.<sup>11</sup> The US forces in MND-North looked like soldiers who were ready to conduct combat operations, if necessary, and win decisively.

Some US forces in MND-North were exempt from the TF Eagle force protection requirements. For instance Special Operations Forces (SOF) in MND-North were never required to travel in four-vehicle convoys and wear body-armor and Kevlar helmets all the time. SOF performed two primary functions in MND-North. First they served as liaison teams between TF Eagle Headquarters and non-US, Allied units to ensure that the activities of coalition units were integrated, especially fire support and medical evacuation. The second mission for SOF was to serve as liaison teams with local communities. These teams actually lived in homes in communities throughout MND-North, and provided the TF Eagle commander with timely and accurate information concerning activities in their particular area of operation that could impact on the decisions made by the TF Eagle commander. Success for these teams required maintaining rapport with the local population, and, through their reports, to be able compress the communications hierarchy that generally slowed down TF Eagle's ability to respond to potential crises. Paramount for the success of these SOF teams was meeting the local people on the local people's terms, and the force protection measures mentioned earlier would have prevented the rapport necessary for an honest and candid exchange of information between the Special Forces soldiers and the indigenous people.<sup>12</sup> In the case of SOF, a modified force protection posture enhanced their ability to accomplish the mission.

As 1996 came to a close, IFOR gave way to the Stabilization Force (SFOR), the environment in BiH had changed, and so did the tasks associated with the mission of US forces in MND-North. In November 1996, the 1st Infantry Division relieved the 1st AD in MND-North, retaining the TF Eagle designation. A year before, in December 1995, TF Eagle had made an assumption that the deployment of forces into BiH would not be entirely permissive,<sup>13</sup> but this new rotation of TF Eagle was entering a different environment. In his December 1996 report to Congress, President Clinton described the situation in BiH in different terms.

War no longer wages through Bosnia. Weapons have been contoned, troops demobilized, and territory exchanged. While inter-ethnic tensions remain, the killing has ended and peace is taking hold. Building on its accomplishments of military tasks that established the necessary environment for civilian implementation, IFOR also assisted in the overall civilian implementation effort, including elections support, support to the international criminal tribunal and the facilitation of freedom of movement of civilian persons.<sup>14</sup>

After nearly a year's worth of peace enforcement experience, a better understanding of the situation in BiH, and an environment that now appeared ripe for implementing the civilian aspects of the DPA, US military leaders placed less emphasis on force protection in their written guidance. However, the effects of this new emphasis were not apparent on the ground.

By December 1996, force protection was no longer articulated as the EUCOM commander's number one priority. Even so, force protection was still a top priority, and the personal safety of US forces remained paramount.<sup>15</sup> However, General Montgomery Meigs, who was the TF Eagle commander from November 1996 through July 1997, stated in a recent interview, "force protection is not a mission."<sup>16</sup> Hence, there was no reference to force protection in then-Major General Meig's mission statement as the

incoming TF Eagle commander in late 1996. Unlike the experience of the first rotation of US soldiers to BiH, force protection was not a stated mission essential task for TF Eagle soldiers that were part of the first rotation under SFOR.

MG Meigs began to emphasize greater interaction with civil authorities and the local population as a result of the changing environment, and the perception among senior US civilian leaders that peace enforcement was progressing. While much progress was achieved in separating the conventional combat forces of the warring factions, inter-ethnic tension, as President Clinton noted in his report to Congress, did still exist, and the nature of the risks to stability were changing. MG Meigs redefined the military tasks associated with peace enforcement within the scope of the DPA because among the former warring factions “secret intelligence services working with militaries were putting a safe and secure environment at risk.”<sup>17</sup> Serbs disseminated nationalist propaganda throughout BiH, encouraged civil disobedience, and incidents of ethnic-related criminal violence were common. The military tasks were focused on maintaining a stable, peaceful environment conducive to implementing the civil aspects of the DPA.

In light of the shift in risks to security and stability, TF Eagle began to make changes to the way it conducted operations. MG Meigs was keenly aware that the center of gravity in MND-North, and all of BiH, in December 1996, was not the military units of the former warring factions, but the people of BiH. As for the SOF elements that were exempt from the TF Eagle force protection rules, interaction with the civilian population became a critical task. According to MG Meigs, “you have to be able to meet the other person on his level, and be inside his frame of reference.”<sup>18</sup> To a limited degree, TF Eagle adjusted the way it conducted patrols. When interacting with the local civilian

population, soldiers were permitted, and even encouraged, to remove their Kevlar helmets and body armor. According to MG Meigs, the relaxed posture sent “a comforting signal to the locals, and they were glad to see that, ok, this means that we’re that much farther away from a return to violence.”<sup>19</sup> Taking off the protective gear also allowed TF Eagle soldiers to send an equally effective message when putting it back on-- that something serious was happening, the level of security was being raised, and that SFOR was prepared to enforce peace and maintain stability.

However, in spite of permission by the TF Eagle commander to modify protective gear worn by patrols, modifications to force protection posture were not widespread, and the task force continued to enforce strict force protection measures for US forces throughout MND-North. US TF Eagle units were still required to move in convoys of no less than four vehicles which created predictable behavior on the part of the US units. One could easily anticipate US units would patrol only during daylight hours, in vehicles rather than on foot, and in groups of vehicles large enough to be detected and avoided if one wanted to do so.<sup>20</sup> The routine and predictable behavior by the US forces arguably created as much risk as it was trying to avoid. While there were certainly examples of military personnel meeting the local people on their level, it was not common and was generally limited to SOF and Civil Affairs units. The critical task of interacting with the people on their level, as described by GEN Meigs, was not uniformly conducted throughout MND-North.

The fact that the Commander included force protection in the first TF Eagle mission statement created an unprecedented emphasis on protecting troops. This emphasis led to a perception among all forces in IFOR and SFOR, that force protection

was more important to US commanders than anything else they were doing, including the mission of enforcing the peace. Oftentimes, force protection was the most critical factor in decision-making by US commanders.

In a recent study by three United States Military Academy faculty members, two oral presentations to academy cadets and an article in *Army* magazine were cited that support the fact that there was a clear understanding among US commanders in BiH that force protection was the priority. This group of three officers, which included a company-grade officer, a Major, and a battalion commander, stated that avoiding casualties was the top-priority mission in the American sector in BiH. This priority was passed down by the chain of command with efficient military discipline.<sup>21</sup>

The tremendous emphasis on protection was an unquestioned, routine part of the operations conducted by TF Eagle through three division rotations in MND-North. As stated earlier, force protection was a paramount issue for 1st AD in 1995 and 1996, and was emphasized during all phases of planning and execution.<sup>22</sup> During the daily TF Eagle briefings between November 1997 and July 1998, “the command group was always very concerned with potential casualties.”<sup>23</sup> During this same time, the TF Eagle staff stressed the issue of force protection more than any other, and it was routinely regarded as an essential task without any staff discussion.<sup>24</sup> In Task Force 4-12 from January 1996 through November 1996, the subject of force protection dominated staff discussions and command briefings, and protection was the commander’s highest priority.<sup>25</sup> The importance of avoiding casualties and protecting the force was emphasized so greatly by the entire US chain of command that force protection was nearly always the most critical factor for commander’s decisions during mission analysis.

The high priority given to force protection in planning also manifested itself in the execution of operations by US units in MND-North. From January through November 1996, TF 4-12 occupied two separate base camps, or lodgment areas, and comprised three rifle companies and one armor company. Most of the roads in and around the task force's area would not support routine tank movement, so the tank company often remained at the base camp. The security of the two camps required one rifle company, and of the remaining two companies, one or two platoons would be required to conduct non-peace enforcement tasks assigned by the higher headquarters. This left only one rifle company with an additional platoon to actually be involved in peace enforcement. When bad weather struck, or TF 4-12 was assigned the mission of conducting weapons site inventories, which is a peace enforcement related mission, all patrols were suspended. During March 1996, TF 4-12 had to provide one company to secure the TF Eagle headquarters at Tuzla and that also caused the suspension of patrols. Because of the large portion of his force dedicated to protecting base camps, the commander of TF 4-12 generally had only one-fourth of his unit available to him for peace enforcement activities.<sup>26</sup>

Force protection did not hinder initial mission accomplishment for TF Eagle, which was focused on establishing the zone of separation between the former warring factions. However, as IFOR made progress, and the environment demanded more civil-military cooperation, US force protection measures did hamper mission accomplishment. The emphasis that commanders, from CINC USEUCOM to TF Eagle battalions, placed on force protection influenced the military decision making process, and at times, a higher priority was given to protection than to enforcing the peace.

Another crucial aspect of US emphasis on force protection in BiH, was its effect on multinational operations. Army doctrine identifies two principles of war that are key to the success of multinational operations--objective and unity of command. Multinational operations must be directed toward clearly defined, well-understood objectives, and in BiH, the DPA provided the common goals for the NATO-led force. Unity of command is also described as unity of effort, and it demands a greater degree of cooperation than unilateral operations. The commander of a multinational force rarely achieves absolute authority, and consensus among multinational commanders becomes critical for success.<sup>27</sup> TF Eagle in MND-North was, and remains today, a multinational force in which the principles of objective and unity of effort are key to its success. When examining the operations of the task force based on the doctrinal principles of objective and unity of effort, one discovers that force protection did in fact degrade mission accomplishment.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, force protection policy in BiH was directed along national lines, and the “stringent protection measures”<sup>28</sup> employed by US forces did not apply to non-US units. According to an After Action Review hosted by the US Army Peacekeeping Institute, US force protection measures “hampered multinational and civil-military cooperation.”<sup>29</sup> According to Lieutenant Colonel Walter Kretchik, in his July-August 1997 *Military Review* article, the disparity in force protection between US and non-US units of IFOR often created friction and confusion. US officers felt strongly that American leaders valued the lives of their soldiers more than their Allies did. However, some US soldiers questioned their leaders’ motives, felt that US officers didn’t trust their subordinates, and that US leaders were simply concerned with avoiding

incidents.<sup>30</sup> The disparity among force protection procedures was apparent when US and non-US soldiers worked closely together. As non-US Allies moved about with minimal protective gear, and interacted more freely with the local people, US soldiers remained confined to base camps encumbered by protective gear. These inconsistencies led to some morale problems among the US members of TF Eagle.<sup>31</sup>

Based on the first-hand observations of a non-US officer who served in MND-North, the US emphasis on force protection “hampered mission accomplishment,”<sup>32</sup> and negatively impacted the success of multinational operations in three ways: the relative output of US and non-US units, the degree which each fostered civilian-military cooperation, and the conduct of combined tactical operations. The requirement for US units to travel in four-vehicle convoys resulted in US units conducting fewer patrols than non-US units. The NORDPOL Brigade regularly conducted dismounted patrols of varying sized depending on what the environment demanded, which resulted in them conducting approximately four times as many patrols as US forces. Secondly, US force protection measures limited the commanders’ flexibility when interacting with the local civilian population, limiting their ability to meet the local people on their level, which resulted in lost opportunities to gain valuable information. Additionally, unlike non-US forces, the US patrols could not increase their protective posture to send a message to the locals that they were anticipating hostility and were prepared to deal with it. Lastly, combined tactical operations were strained and led to a lack of confidence on the part of the Allies toward their US colleagues. One disturbing example occurred when a non-US patrol became involved in a hostile situation, causing the patrol leader to request an

emergency evacuation by US helicopters. Although no Allies were killed or wounded, the patrol was denied the evacuation because US commanders felt the risk was too high.<sup>33</sup>

Clearly, US force protection measures hindered multinational operations. The disparity in force protection between US and non-US organizations caused a perception among US allies concerning the level of mission accomplishment as measured by the number of patrols conducted. Additionally, US commanders were not able to develop an environment of cooperation between military forces and the local civilian population equal to that of non-US forces. Last, incidents such as denying the request for emergency air evacuation by the Allied patrol eroded the mutual confidence necessary among military units, whether they are multinational or not. US force protection violated the principle of unity of effort, which is key to the success of multinational operations.

The final significant discovery of this research found that US Army leadership in BiH held a fundamental view of the relationship between protection and mission that actually undermined mission accomplishment. In an attempt to balance mission and protection, the scales always tipping in favor of force protection, because US leaders perceived it to be more important.

There is evidence that TF Eagle's leaders thought there was a need to balance force protection and mission accomplishment, which logically permitted force protection to become more important because of USEUCOM emphasis and the influence of US domestic concerns. In TF 4-12 from January 1996-November 1996, the commander always discussed the need to balance force protection with mission accomplishment, but "force protection was always number one,"<sup>34</sup> and avoiding casualties was always more important to the success of the task force than the mission was. The view among US

leaders that the safety of the troops was more important than the mission, as noted earlier, was summed up by MAJ Yantis as he explained the cautious deployment of US forces into BiH. According to a non-US officer who served in TF Eagle, “when planning operations, the first priority mission was always force protection.”<sup>35</sup>

If one applies the Army doctrinal view of protection as an element of combat power that enables commanders to accomplish the mission, then one would never sense a need to balance protection and mission. TF Eagle’s leadership viewed force protection as a critical task, equal to enforcing the peace, and therefore developed protection measures that had protecting soldiers as their success criteria, independent of the mission to enforce the peace. With both protection and peace enforcement as their critical tasks, US leaders had accepted a non-Army doctrinal view of balancing force protection and mission accomplishment, thus establishing a foundational model for force protection to become more important.

Four aspects of US military operations in BiH are significant in understanding the emphasis that US forces placed on force protection. First, protecting the force was included in the initial mission statement for forces deploying to BiH. While emphasizing the importance of protection as an element of combat power to better enable mission accomplishment is not unusual, considering force protection a mission-essential task is unusual. Secondly, if one considers the initial tasks of separating the former warring factions and establishing the zone of separation, specific force protection measures, alone, did not hamper mission accomplishment. However, when considering how the environment changed, requiring IFOR and SFOR to place more effort on civil-military cooperation, US force protection measures did hinder TF Eagle’s ability to meet the local

population on their level, and foster a stronger rapport between US soldiers and the local people. Third, the disparity between the force protection measures of US forces and non-US forces violated the principle unity of effort, a critical element necessary for successful multinational operations. This disparity eroded the confidence needed among the multinational units to achieve the common goals stated in the DPA. Finally, the non-doctrinal notion that force protection and mission accomplishment must be balanced created an assumption among US leaders that allowed them to view force protection and mission accomplishment as equally important.

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<sup>1</sup>Raymond Bonner, "Winter Keeps U.S. Troops From Bosnia," *New York Times*, 17 December 1995, sec. 1, p 19.

<sup>2</sup>*The General Framework Agreement* available from <http://www.nato.int/ifor/gfa/gfa-an1a.htm>; Internet; accessed on 13 November 00; and *Chapter VII, Action with Respect to Threats to the Peace, Breaches of Peace, and Acts of Aggression, Charter of the United Nations* available from <http://www.un.org/Overview/Charter/chapter7.html>; Internet; accessed on 13 November 00.

<sup>3</sup> Brigadier General Stanley F. Cherrie, "Task Force Eagle", *Military Review*, vol. 77, no. 4 (July-August 1997): 65. BG Cherrie served as the Assistant Division Commander for Maneuver 1st Armored Division during IFOR. His Lessons Learned article in *Military Review* is an insightful and comprehensive work that covers TF Eagle's organization, deployment, and initial operations in MND-North.

<sup>4</sup>USEUCOM OPLAN 4243, JOINT ENDEAVOR available from [http://www.eucom.smil.mil/eccs-or/librar...ration\\_joint\\_endeavour\\_oplan](http://www.eucom.smil.mil/eccs-or/librar...ration_joint_endeavour_oplan); Internet, accessed on 12 Mar 01.

<sup>7</sup>Cherrie, *Task Force Eagle*, 65.

<sup>6</sup>Headquarters, Department of the Army, FM 101-5, *Staff Organization and Operations* (Washington DC: US Government Printing Office, 31 May 1997), 5-5, 5-11.

<sup>7</sup>Cherrie, *Task Force Eagle*, 65.

<sup>8</sup>United States Army Peacekeeping Institute, *Bosnia-Herzegovina After Action Review* available from [http://www.eucom.smil.mil/eccs-or/librar...ration\\_joint\\_endeavor/aar/aar\\_bh\\_2.html](http://www.eucom.smil.mil/eccs-or/librar...ration_joint_endeavor/aar/aar_bh_2.html); accessed on 12 March 01, p. 3 of 7.

<sup>9</sup> Lieutenant Colonel Walter E. Kretchik, "Force Protection Disparities", *Military Review*, vol. 77, no. 4 (July-August 1997): 75, 77. In this study, LTC Kretchik examines the command and control structure related to force protection for IFOR in BiH.

<sup>10</sup>United States Army Peacekeeping Institute, *Bosnia-Herzegovina After Action Review* available from [http://www.eucom.smil.mil/eccs-or/librar....ration\\_joint\\_endeavor/aar/aar\\_bh\\_2.html](http://www.eucom.smil.mil/eccs-or/librar....ration_joint_endeavor/aar/aar_bh_2.html); accessed on 12 March 01, p. 3 of 7.

<sup>11</sup>Cherrie, *Task Force Eagle*, 72.

<sup>12</sup>Major James Higgins, interview by author, written notes, Fort Leavenworth, Ks., 9 January 2001. MAJ Higgins served as an Army Special Forces officer in BiH May-August 1996, January-April 1997, and December 1997-March 1998.

<sup>13</sup>Cherrie, *Task Force Eagle*, 70.

<sup>14</sup>President William J. Clinton, *Supplemental Report on the Deployment of United States Armed Forces to Bosnia and Other States in the Region, Communication from the President of the United States to the 105th Congress* (Washington DC: US Government Printing Office: 1997), 1.

<sup>15</sup>USEUCOM OPLAN 4243, JOINT GUARD available from [http://www.eucom.smil.mil/eccs-or/librar....ration\\_joint\\_guard\\_oplan](http://www.eucom.smil.mil/eccs-or/librar....ration_joint_guard_oplan) Internet, accessed on 12 Mar 01.

<sup>16</sup>General Montgomery C. Meigs, Commander in Chief United States Army Europe, interview by Dr. Robert Baumann and Dr. George Gawrych both of the Combat Studies Institute of the Army Combined Arms Center at Fort Leavenworth, December 2000, video tape, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. GEN Meigs served as the Commander TF Eagle November 1996 through July 1997, and as the Commander SFOR from October 1998 through October 1999.

<sup>17</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup>Major Aldo Biagiotti, interview by author, written notes, Fort Leavenworth, Ks., 22 January 2001. MAJ Biagiotti, US Army, served in BiH as the Headquarters Commandant of Tuzla Main, MND-North, November 1996 through July 1997.

<sup>21</sup>Professor Don Snider, Major John Nagl and Major Tony Pfaff, *Army Professionalism, The Military Ethic, and Officership in the 21st Century* available from <http://www.usafa.af.mil/jscope/JSCOPE00/Snider/Snider00.html>; accessed on 26 April 00, p. 3 of 7.

<sup>22</sup>Cherrie, *Task Force Eagle*, 65.

<sup>23</sup>Lieutenant Colonel Dennis Gyllensporre, interview by author, written notes, Fort Leavenworth Ks., 22 March 01. LtCol, Gyllensporre, Swedish Army, served in BiH as the NORD/POL Brigade Liaison Officer to Headquarters, 1st Armored Division from November 1997 through July 1998.

<sup>24</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup>Major Paul Sarat, interview by author, written notes, Fort Leavenworth, Ks., 15 February 01. MAJ Sarat, US Army, served in BiH as an Infantry Company Commander and Headquarters Company Commander, 4th Battalion, 12 Infantry Regiment, 1st Armored Division, from January 1996 through November 1996.

<sup>26</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>27</sup>Headquarters, Department of the Army, FM 100-8, *The Army in Multinational Operations* (Washington DC: US Government Printing Office, 24 November 1997), 1-2, 1-3.

<sup>28</sup>United States Army Peacekeeping Institute, *Bosnia-Herzegovina After Action Review*, p. 3 of 7.

<sup>29</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup>Kretchik, *Force Protection Disparities*, 75-77.

<sup>31</sup>*Ibid.*, 76; and Lieutenant Colonel Dennis Gyllensporre and Majors Aldo Biagiotti, James Higgins and Paul Sarat, interviews by author.

<sup>32</sup>Lieutenant Colonel Dennis Gyllensporre, interview by author.

<sup>33</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>34</sup>Major Paul Sarat, interview by author.

<sup>35</sup>Lieutenant Colonel Dennis Gyllensporre, interview by author.

## CHAPTER 5

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The American way of war, and the American way of preventing war, is increasingly characterized by a desire for its military to conduct casualty-free operations. This casualty-free inclination to warfare has been praised by international aid organizations, and condemned by some of our military allies. It has led many self-professed military theorists to suggest, through editorials, that the US military has abandoned its warrior ethos. It has caused military leaders to feel micro-managed by domestic political processes that demand unachievable goals, and place unrealistic constraints on them. Finally, it is causing many soldiers to examine the US Army in a most profound way.

The American expectation of casualty-free military operations has caused an unprecedented emphasis on protecting the lives of those who serve in the military. Over the past six years, force protection, an inherent responsibility of all military leaders, has gained a status of extraordinary importance in the US military. This importance has created a complicated challenge for Army leaders as they struggle to conduct military operations without casualties. This perplexing struggle exists in BiH, where US Army forces are conducting peace operations as part of a multinational force.

This research revealed evidence that enables one to better understand a number of issues related to the Army's development and application of force protection during peace operations. It assessed military operations conducted in BiH by the US led TF Eagle from January 1996-July 1998, to examine the relationship between force protection

and mission accomplishment. The research confirmed that US policy decisions to withdraw forces from operations are likely when a public lack of understanding for military intervention is combined with American casualties, and that domestic political issues will continue to have an enormous impact on how American military operations are conducted. The evidence showed that protecting the force was, in fact, a stated mission for US forces in Task Force Eagle. While some force protection measures, alone, did not hamper the ability of US forces to accomplish their initial assigned tasks, evidence revealed that they hindered the US Army's ability to establish and maintain the necessary level of rapport with local civilians. Evidence also demonstrated that a disparity existed between the force protection policy of US forces and non-US forces. This disparity undermined the confidence necessary between forces of different nations that is critical to the success of multinational military operations. Finally, force protection policy was developed based on an approach that attempts to balance protection with the mission, instead of the Army doctrinal approach, which develops protection measures in order to enhance a unit's ability to accomplish its mission.

The problems that led to war in BiH during the early 1990s are complex. In December 1995, when US forces were deploying to BiH as part of a larger NATO-led, peacekeeping force, few Americans fully understood the complexities of the conflict, nor the tenuous peace agreement between the former warring factions. Six years later, their level of understanding has only slightly improved. Many US political leaders were not much better informed about the nature of BiH than were the citizenry. As a result of the numerous news stories centered on the plight of civilians displaced by the fighting, or who were victims of ethnic cleansing, many Americans incorrectly viewed the conflict in

BiH as a humanitarian problem, rather than a war that was creating humanitarian problems.

As evidenced by this study, the US has established a record of withdrawing forces when casualties occur during military operations that are not understood by the American public. American misunderstanding of the problem in BiH obviously led to an equal level of misunderstanding concerning the role of military forces there. This misunderstanding, combined with a desire for casualty-free military operations, made US peace operations in BiH ripe for failure. This risk of failure was not a result of an inability of the US military to enforce the Dayton Peace Accord; rather, as in Lebanon and Somalia, it was a product of the idea that casualties themselves constituted mission failure.

This view led to an unprecedented US emphasis on preventing casualties. Consequently, force protection was equal to mission accomplishment in the USEUCOM plan deploying military forces to BiH. TF Eagle, the force assigned the MND-North area of responsibility included both peace enforcement, and force protection in their mission statement--viewing both as necessary to achieve success. Thus, force protection was, in fact, a mission of US forces in BiH.

In spite of an emphasis on force protection, TF Eagle achieved all of their initial objectives related to separating the former warring factions, and establishing a geographical zone of separation. However, as the environment changed so did the nature of peace enforcement. Over time, the major threat to peace shifted from renewed fighting between factional armies to the lingering inter-ethnic tensions among the people of BiH. This new threat required an emphasis on civil-military cooperation, and TF Eagle soldiers

were required to meet the local people on their level. Maintaining a rapport with the civilian population enabled some units to prevent inter-ethnic tension from becoming violent. However, for most of the US forces, stringent force protection measures hindered the type of contact with civilians that was necessary to establish and maintain a rapport.

Evidence also revealed that a disparity in national force protection policies contributed to a lack of unity of effort in the multinational force. Force protection was, and remains, a national decision in BiH. The stringent US force protection measures only applied to US forces in MND-North. Non-US units developed their own, independent force protection policy. This created a visible distinction between US and non-US forces and this disparity violated the principle of unity of effort, and eroded the confidence of non-US units in the ability of US units to share the burdens and risks of peace enforcement--both of which are necessary for successful multinational operations according to Army doctrine.

Army doctrine states that protection is applied with the elements of combat power to achieve mission success, and force protection measures are intended to counter anything that might jeopardize mission accomplishment. If one believes that force protection must be balanced with mission accomplishment, then avoiding casualties can potentially be more important than mission accomplishment. Evidence showed that this was the case in BiH, because the decisions and actions by commanders supported this relationship between protection and mission, and there was a widespread perception that protecting the force and avoiding casualties was the number one priority.

The notion that military leaders must balance force protection with the mission is not a view shared only by those soldiers who have served in BiH. This study conducted an informal survey of Army Majors and found that not one in fifty even mentioned a relationship with mission accomplishment when asked to define force protection in their own words. When asked if force protection has a relationship to mission accomplishment using their definition, every officer stated that the two must be balanced in order to achieve success. A minority of the officers included that mission should always be more important than force protection.<sup>1</sup> This demonstrates a clear lack of understanding among the Army's best Majors for the doctrinal purpose of force protection.

Doctrine is not intended to be a set of mandatory techniques and procedures, but a guide for the planning and conduct of military operations, and is based on the combination of lessons learned from recent operations, and long-standing principles. However, the results of this survey are indicative of the significant gap that exists between the Army doctrinal view of force protection, and how force protection measures were developed during peace operations in BiH. There is a clear lack of understanding among the Army's best Majors for the doctrinal purpose of force protection. One could logically conclude that operations have influenced the understanding of force protection more than doctrine. Emphasizing doctrine, even to the degree of publishing an Army field manual dedicated exclusively to force protection, may have little effect on improving the Army's understanding of force protection and mission accomplishment. Therefore, the way to change how the Army thinks begins during the conduct of actual military operations.

There are views of the relationship between force protection and mission accomplishment, today, that can serve as a model for the Army. In May 1999, thirty members of Congress visited TF Hawk in Tirana, Albania. LTG John W. Hendrix, then the Commander of V Corps, spoke to the delegation, and discussed the idea of building the task force organization around the deep strike capabilities of the AH-64, Apache Attack Helicopter. He stated that the task force included a robust force protection package consisting of a battalion of attack helicopters, MLRS, and counter-battery radar. None of the members of Congress, nor the handful of Army officers standing at the back of the briefing area made the connection between the organization and resources of the force protection package, and their own understanding of force protection, which meant highly secure base camps, Kevlar helmets, body armor, and sandbags.<sup>2</sup>

However, LTG Hendrix was talking about force protection as Army doctrine intends it to be. TF Hawk's force protection package was designed to protect the force designated as the task force main effort, as it flew long distances over enemy controlled areas to accomplish its mission of destroying specific targets. Force protection measures, as described by LTG Hendrix, were developed to conserve the combat power of the force necessary to accomplish the mission.

There are two ways to mitigate the negative effects of the relationship between force protection and mission accomplishment in BiH. One, while there will continue to be the need for an emphasis on force protection at the strategic level, force protection at the operational and tactical levels should be based on the environment, rather than the influences of domestic political concerns. Second, force protection should be developed

using Army doctrinal principles, rather than viewing force protection as something that must be balanced with mission accomplishment.

Although concern for casualty aversion is rooted in Lebanon, Somalia, and Khobar towers, it is no less an issue in Kosovo.<sup>3</sup> Further, there is no reason to believe it will not continue to be a contentious subject in the future. Three characteristics discussed in this study will continue to be a part of the environment in which military operations will be conducted in the future. First, based on their values, Americans abhor senseless killing. Therefore, the American way of war and preventing war, which desires and sometimes demands casualty-free military operations, will remain a characteristic of the environment in which the Army is expected to serve. Second, national political concerns will continue to define the nation's expectations concerning the conduct military operations, and to influence what goals are considered achievable for the military. Third, the Army will continue to find itself in environments that require it to prevent the war, rather than win the war.

The US Army has historically spent a great deal of time and resources preparing to fight the last major war, and in doing so, rarely applied appropriate doctrine when facing their first experience of the next conflict.<sup>4</sup> In the case of operations in BiH, the doctrinally stated relationship between force protection and mission was appropriate; however, US leaders either chose not use to it, or like the Majors surveyed, didn't really understand it. This misapplication of force protection is being repeated in Kosovo, and has contributed to a misunderstanding among Army leaders of the true nature of force protection and mission accomplishment.

One could speculate that modern American casualty aversion will be a characteristic of future conflict. Technological advancements have resulted in the US developing military capabilities that were not envisioned a decade ago. Ordnance can be delivered from a long distance, out of harm's way, with precise accuracy, unmanned aerial reconnaissance platforms provide real time information to commanders, and an anti-ballistic missile protective shield is a distinct possibility for the future. Will the improvements in standoff military capabilities eventually lead to casualty-free warfare for Americans? Can America assure its national security with standoff military capabilities alone? If so, will there be a need to close with and destroy the enemy in the future? Will casualty-free warfare really come to mean Army-free warfare? While US military casualties will remain an important issue to the American people, it is doubtful that the nation will no longer feel a need for an Army any time soon. In the meantime, the Army must remain relevant to the nation.

The criteria for measuring the effectiveness of force protection should be mission accomplishment, not casualty avoidance. Therefore the true measure of success for the Army conducting peace enforcement is peace. Army leaders cannot continue claiming success in peace operations by reporting that it has no casualties without risking their credibility with Allies, the American people, and their own soldiers. The promulgation of this false characterization of mission success may potentially endanger the Army's relevance to the nation. One way for the Army to remain relevant today is to accurately articulate true mission success. To do this, it must consistently develop force protection measures designed to accomplish the mission, whether that mission is destroying high

payoff targets during deep operations, or enforcing a tenuous peace agreement between belligerents.

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<sup>1</sup>This study conducted an informal survey of 50 Army majors from the Army Command and General Staff College using two questions. One, define force protection in your own words? Two, how does your definition relate to mission accomplishment? Not one officer served provided the Army's doctrinal definition. Not one officer included a relationship to mission accomplishment when defining force protection. When faced with the second question, every officer included that the two should be balanced. Only 14 officers stated that mission should always be more important. No one stated that force protection is an element of combat power that enables commanders to accomplish the mission.

<sup>2</sup>LTG John, W. Hendrix, remarks made to thirty members of the US Congress, written notes, May 1999. The US Congressional delegation was visiting Germany, Albania, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and SHAPE in May 1999. The remarks by LTG Hendrix were part of a briefing to the member of Congress.

<sup>2</sup>Michael Smith, Defense Correspondent, *American* "Body-Bag Syndrome Is Holding Back NATO", London Daily Telegraph, March 21, 2001. Smith argues that America's reluctance to take risks is Hampering NATO progress in Kosovo.

<sup>4</sup>John Shy, "First Battles in Retrospect", *America's First Battles, 1776-1965*, Edited by Charles E. Heller and William A. Stofft (University Press of Kansas, Lawrence, KS, 1986), 332-335. In his concluding chapter of this text, John Shy discusses the application of doctrine in ten of the US military's first battles.

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